PRIVATE EYE

No. 754
Friday
9 Nov. '90

70p

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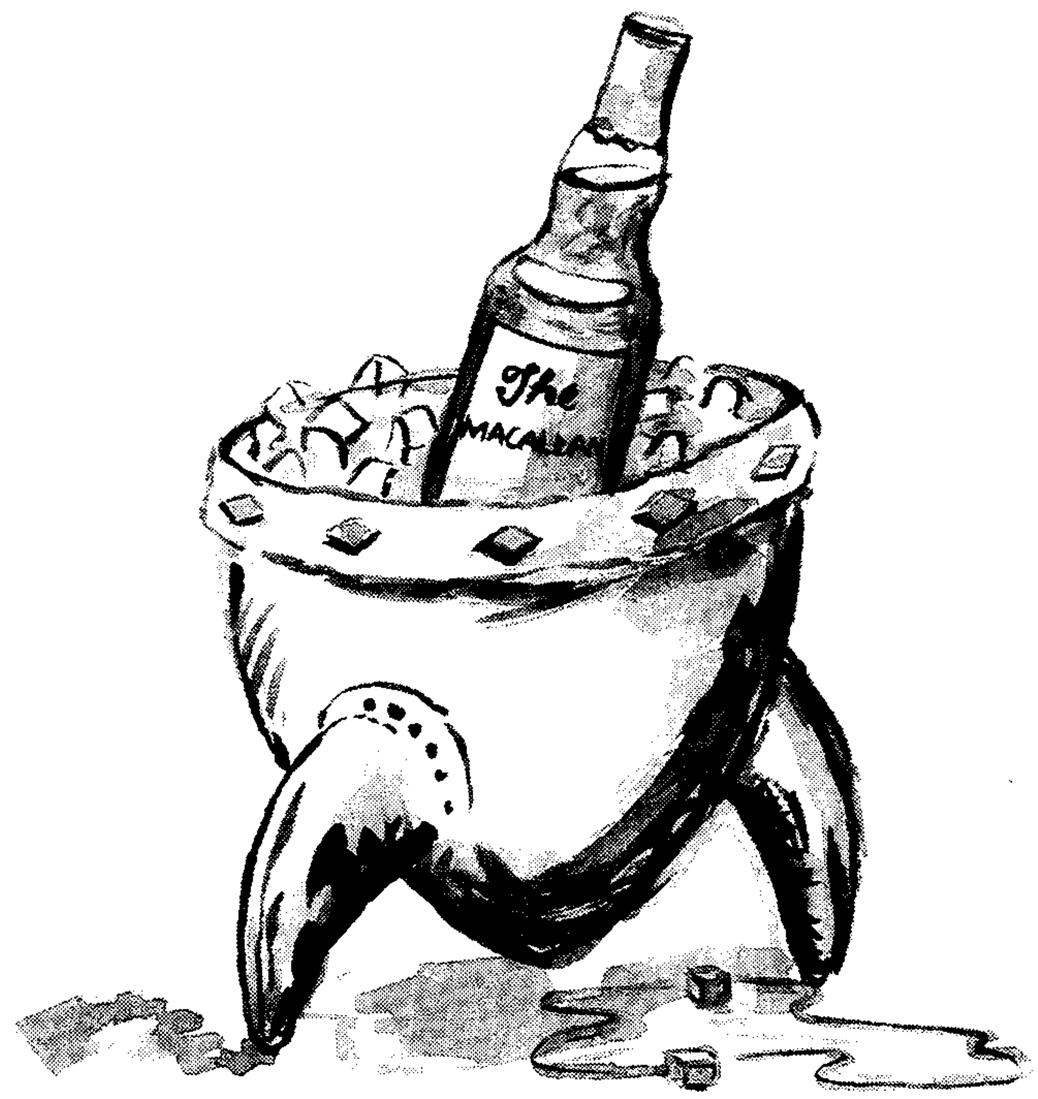
THIS IS THE BEST TIP YOU'VE GIVEN ME FOR AGES ALEX

The Iceman Melteth.



A CHEQUE DRAWN ON THE BANK OF ICELAND accompanied by a request for six bottles of The Macallan Malt Whisky, started a *lively debate* at the Distillery the other day. Was it wise for these stern countrymen of ice and fire to seek out the mellow blandishments of The Macallan? That billowing sherry-oak redolence, with its hints of the *comfortable South,* should be treated with caution by the hardy sons of ERIK THE RED, argued our Moral Tutor. "A few sips could undo centuries of stoicism". But our Sales Director prevailed, and The Macallan was despatched the same evening. However, if you are planning a trip to Iceland, it might now be wise to include a paper hat and some streamers.

The Macallan. The Malt.

Gnome

WHY ON EARTH should anyone object to the merger of GnomeSat and NBG? Instead of two separate satellite companies competing with each other, you now have one satellite monopoly owned by myself. What could be fairer than that?

The new company is to be known as New Bigger Gnomesat, thus cleverly keeping the initials, though sadly none of the staff, of the old NBG. However, the new company will trade under the name GnomeSat because it is much more catchy, and not at all because that way we can avoid being regulated by the IBA.

GnomeSat has never come under any regulations about cross-ownership by newspaper tycoons due to a perfectly clear sub-clause in para 94 of the Broadcasting Bill (1989):

"No newspaper owner whatsoever shall have a major interest in any satellite company except in the case of one whose five daily newspapers have printed the headline VOTE CONSERVATIVE on 38 consecutive front pages in the space of a year."

I hope there will be no further nonsense spoken on this subject.

E. Strobes
pp Lord Gnome
Private Skeye
Gnomesat
Mars.

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COLOUR SECTION

ODECO, the oil company known to *Eye* readers since the Ocean Odyssey blow-out in which a man was killed, has been having trouble on another of its North Sea rigs, Ocean Kokuei.

The "blow-out preventer", which is meant to be failsafe in the event of a blow-out, failed twice: once on a contract for Fina and again on a recent job drilling for Sun Oil in the Stirling Field.

On both occasions the preventer stuck and had to be brought to the surface for repair. It was generally believed by the men on the rig that if a blow-out ever did occur, the preventer would not be able to close the well in. The consequences would be of Piper Alpha proportions.

Odeco spent a quarter of a million pounds trying to put the matter right but Sun Oil, which insisted repairs of this kind "did not fit into the company's timetable", terminated the contract and sent Odeco packing.

This was especially embarrassing on the Ocean Kokuei, which had just won the British Safety Council's four-star award. The award has not gone down well with a roustabout on the rig who recently had a hole blown in his leg by a steam cleaner. He is in hospital with only a 25 per cent chance of saving his lower leg.

IT WAS with a sense of amazement that Lord Gnome saw the *Sunset Times* claiming credit on 28 October for the arrests of Hatton and Co in Liverpool.

At the top of its front page it boasted how it had played a prominent role in the investigation — another triumph for Insight. Regular *Eye* readers, who learnt of the Hatton-Wimpey connection as long ago as *1988* (issue 705), will realise the *Sunset Times* was being more than a little disingenuous.

It was the *Sunset Times*, after all, that serialised the podgy thug's "autobiography", *Inside Left*, and its sister rag the *Sun* paid Hatton to be a male model. While Murdoch's men were giving Degsy money, the *Eye* was listing 20 things he had forgotten to mention (issue 682).

In fact Andrew Neill's *ST* worked over ground already well ploughed not only by the *Eye* but by papers as various as the *Mail*, *New Statesmen*, *Today*, the *Liverpool Echo*, *Daily Post* and the *News of the World*. The unhealthily intimate relationship between Keva Coombes and Hatton has been chronicled many, many times in Murkeyside.

The belated arrests are in fact due to the appointment of a new chief constable on Merseyside, James Sharples, to replace Sir Kenneth Oxford. This time the force and the DPP *wanted* to nail Hatton. Previously the fraud squad was convinced it had an overwhelming case but couldn't understand why charges were not brought. Indeed, the *World in Action* exposé of Hatton in 1985 was rushed through to avoid being caught sub-judice. Producers had been assured by police that arrests would follow shortly. Current fraud squad detectives looking back at the files have confessed astonishment that cases were not brought to trial then.

The reasons suggested at that time included possible political interference from Mrs Thatcher, who had every reason to want to keep Hatton out and about in order to embarrass the Labour Party, and local police protection (it is an indication of how much faith senior officers have in Liverpool's finest that police going to arrest Hatton & Co were originally told it was a drugs raid!)

The *Eye* also reported on Hatton's friend Tony Beyga and his erstwhile holiday companion Kevin Alphonsus Dooley, who was Sir Kenneth Oxford's solicitor at the time.

THE CURIOUS contracting policy of London Underground continues with the award of the contract to supervise a new multi-million pound fire alarm system on the Tube to a firm called JQ Electrical.

The firm, a subsidiary of JQ Construction, was set up specifically to win the contract — without even being asked if it had a certificate from the National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting. Electricians have been surprised at the extraordinarily high turnover of staff.

THE RAPE of a patient at the St Helier hospital has focused attention on the security company employed to watch over it, Unitrust Protection Services.

The company advertises heavily in colleges and makes full use of student labour at the places and functions it protects (for example, Henley Regatta, Christie's auctions, the Grosvenor House Antiques Fair and, most prestigious of all, the Conservative Party's winter ball.)

Students who have contacted the *Eye* have remarked on the rudimentary training they are given before taking up their posts. One young man has disclosed that he had a five-minute interview and was asked, among other things, what size trousers he wore (the company are not known for wasting too much money on closely-fitting uniforms — and the students treat their uniforms none too kindly: many simply lie down and go to sleep in them).

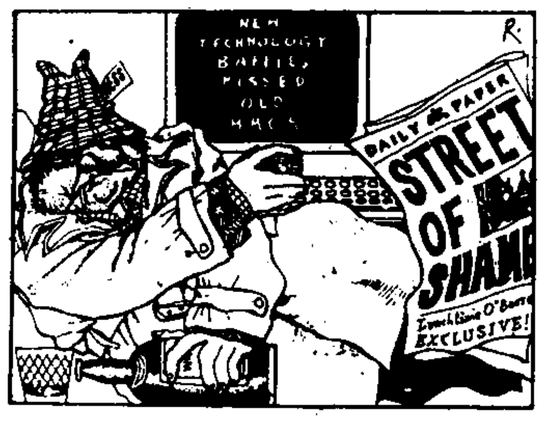
Figures have been provided by another student hired to guard a large Arab residence in Berkshire (he is scrupulous enough not to say which one). This employs six "security guards" when the owners are away (most of the time) and 20 when they are home. About three quarters of these "guards" are students who work 72 hours a week at £3 an hour (no overtime, no bonus). The Arabs pay the company an extra sum (it was £3,000 this year) if nothing is stolen during their short stay.

One guard was recently transferred from the Arab residence to the St Helier hospital. His departure was greeted with some relief by his colleagues. They had grown weary of his obsession with martial arts, which he practised day and night, and especially weary of his Alsatian dog which was meant to be trained in security but whose chief inclination was to bite the other guards.

NEWS OF Gerald Ronson's favoured treatment in Ford open prison recalls his trial plea for clemency because of his good works.

Eye readers perusing back copies — 677, for example — will be reminded just how good and charitable are his works. Greater love hath no tycoon than he who gives most of Heron's shares to three charities controlled by himself, never pays a dividend and declares their worth as "nil" on the Charity Commissioners' returns.

"He's got Geoffrey Howe's old job!"



FOGEYISH Charles Moore, who is now Max Hastings' sidekick at the *Daily Telegraph*, is feeling immensely pleased with himself for having lured cartoonist Nick Garland away from the *Indescribablyboring*.

Unable to resist gloating at his coup, Moore announced the appointment on the front page of the *Telegraph* last Friday, describing Garland as "the political cartoonist who left the *Daily Telegraph* in 1986 to become one of the founders of the *Independent*".

This, as Moore well knew, was not strictly true. The *Indie's* founders were Andreas Whittam Strobes, Matthew Symonds and Stephen Glover; Garland was merely one of several hundred staff whom they recruited. By suggesting that Garland founded the newspaper, Moore was trying to provoke his old friend Symonds — and he succeeded. The humourless Symonds, who now styles himself executive editor of the *Indie*, fired off a pompous letter to the *Telegraph* complaining about this grave libel; only he, Whittam Strobes and Glover were legally entitled to the honour of being called "founders", he boasted. The following day's *Telegraph* duly carried a small correction which made Symonds look even more ridiculous.

But while Charles Moore crows over his triumph, other *Telegraph* staff are less delighted by the imminent reappearance of Garland. It is only a few months since the perfidious cartoonist published *Not Many Dead*, his "Journal of a Year in Fleet Street", in which he shamelessly betrayed and rubbished many colleagues at both the *Telegraph* and the *Indescribablyboring*.

Garland must be hoping that Max "Hitler" Hastings himself — who in last Friday's *Telegraph* spoke of his "tremendous pleasure" at recruiting "the greatest political cartoonist in Britain" — hasn't read the book too closely. On page 44 of *Not Many Dead*, after learning that "Hitler" is to edit the *Telegraph*, Garland writes; "Hastings is obviously an interesting appointment but it struck a dread in my heart. I think of him as intelligent, ambitious, crudely insensitive self-centred and arrogant. It's an awful mixture. He's the kind of guy you can't write off and you can't like. You just have to lump him."

Later in the book, after working with the new editor for some weeks, Garland's judgement is more succinct: he describes Hastings as a "blundering oaf".

"SAD TO see the end of *Saturday Night*," Garry "Gal" Bushell mused in his thoughtful TV column in the *Sun* last week.

"This show was rough, raw, dangerous round the edges... and too pricey for Sky just now. If any terrestrial channel had the bottle to put it on, they'd have a smash on their hands."

There was one small point about *Saturday Night* which he forgot to mention: the star of this brilliant show was that well-known media personality, Mensa-member and amateur gorilla, Garry Bushell.

DONALD "Busy" Trelford had his office invaded last week by an angry delegation of *Observer* hacks led by Barry Hugill, the ex-Trotskyist who is now the paper's education correspondent.

Flinging a copy of the previous week's issue on to the Pixie's desk, Hugill and his mates announced that there was nothing in it of any interest to readers under the age of 35. The paper was full of antediluvian news stories and bufferish columnists. The "Yoof" of Britain would not stand for it.

A startled Trelford promised to see what he could do to appeal to younger readers, and since then he has been urgently pondering the problem. Some hacks even swear that they have overheard him muttering "Cowabunga!" — but no doubt this is a figment of their imagination.

A RECENT edition of the *Sunday Mirror* carried what amounted to a thinly-veiled retraction of a story which was published the previous week and alleged that an outbreak of the encephalitis virus (spread by mosquitoes) had caused Disney World to close early at night.

In fact the swift correction was due to the fact that Mr and Mrs Nick Pollard — alias *Daily Express* editor Nick Lloyd and *Sunday Mirror* editor Eve Pollard — had flown out on a freebie to Florida as guests of Disney World. When they arrived they were greeted by a Disney World flunky who, instead of bowing and scraping to Fleet Street's first couple, proceeded to berate La Bollard for the inaccurate item which had apparently caused many British families to cancel their visits.

An embarrassed and angry Bollard immediately phoned her office and told the paper to print a positive story.

MEANWHILE "Brute" Anderson has been busily clocking up expenses at the *Sunday Torygraph*, despite a new regime that has even called into question some claims by the paper's "editor", Trevor Grove.

Hacks recall how a couple of years ago Bruce ordered an executive minicab to ferry him to Saltwood Castle in Kent for lunch with the castle's owner, Alan Clark MP. Anderson took a leisurely three hours over his meal before being driven back to town and put in an expenses claim for more than £500.

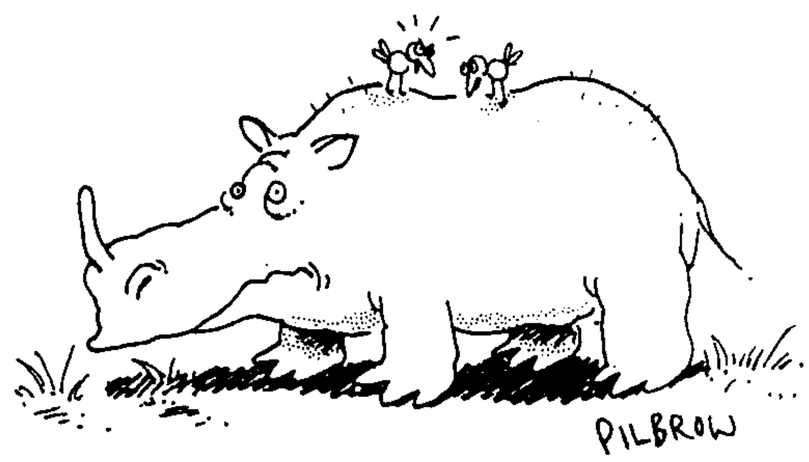
Recently, however, he has attempted to top this. Finding that work commitments were going to make him late for an edition of Radio 4's *Any Questions* in Cornwall, he arranged to be flown there in a helicopter belonging to his chum Lord McAlpine. He has now submitted an expenses claim for this jaunt amounting to a modest £2,000.

THERE WAS a fraught encounter when Edward Heath hosted a dinner party for political hacks at his home in Salisbury during the recent Conservative Party conference.

Evidently Heath's staff were ignorant of certain associations between some of the guests they had invited to meet their master, for seated opposite one another were Bruce Anderson of the *Sunday Torygraph* and Anthony Bevins, political editor of the *Indescribablyboring*.

Only last year during the Labour Party conference, *Eye* readers may recall, Bevins had an altercation with Anderson in a hotel bar. He called

"Now you're just nitpicking"



Anderson "a fucking racist" and attempted to headbutt him.

This time Bevins showed restraint, though he barely exchanged a word with Anderson throughout the meal. When Anderson got up to leave, Edward Heath was heard to ask the identity of "that fat person".

DESPERATELY casting around for ways to make and save money, Cap'n Bob has taken the eccentric decision to put up the price of the *European* — aka *Le Pisse-pauvre* — in Saudi Arabia.

Readers in Jeddah will now have to pay eight *rials* per copy instead of seven. Everywhere else in the world the cover-price remains the same. (Perhaps in a reference to the beleaguered House of Saud, the change was announced in a memo headed "Prince Increase".) Some unkind observers may suggest that Maxwell is thereby exploiting Our Boys, but this would be most unfair — not least because it seems highly unlikely that even squaddies in the desert would be bored enough to want to read the Cap'n's dreary organ.

Meanwhile back at base, *Le P-p's* editor Ian Watson is doing his bit to cut costs: none of the paper's photographers has yet been given a contract. Like many of the hacks, they are continuing to work full-time on a "casual" basis — which will make it much cheaper to pay them off should the rag turn up its toes.

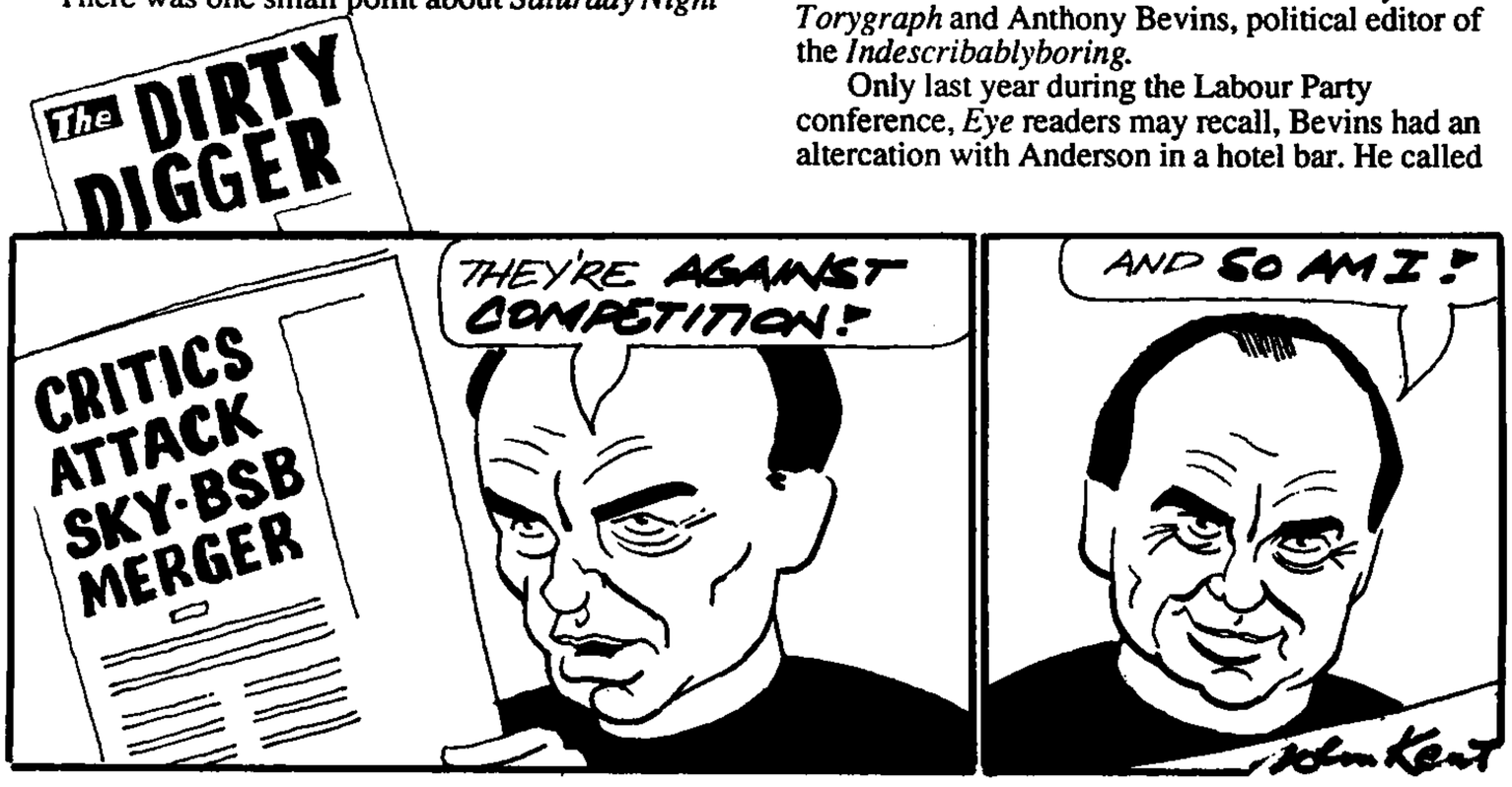
Nick Rodgers, a former feature photographer of the year who left *The Times* to take colour snaps for Cap'n Bob, got tired of this arrangement, especially as he was owed nearly £10,000 in back-pay and expenses. He wrote a strongly-worded fax to Watson, who told chubby picture editor Stuart Nicol to forget his promise to Rodgers of an eventual staff job and to stop using him immediately. Rodgers is now consulting his union, the NUJ, about how to get the money he is owed.

"A TUNNEL at last links Britain and France..." Thus began an editorial in last week's *Economist* celebrating the success of the Chunnelers. It was particularly lavish in its praise for Eurotunnel's "exceptionally tough" chairman, Alastair Morton, and his "fight for the interests of shareholders".

The *Economist* certainly knew what it was writing about. The anonymous author of this editorial was the paper's deputy editor Nico Colchester — who just happens to be a shareholder in Eurotunnel. One or two hacks on the paper queried whether it was entirely ethical to have Colchester writing leaders about the Chunnel without declaring his interest. "Oh don't be silly," one executive replied airily. "As long as *we* all know Nico's got shares in it, what does it matter?"

Meanwhile the *Economist* is grappling with another slight conflict-of-interest problem involving its latest recruit, Stephen Milligan. Until recently Milligan was BBC TV's European editor, but he was forced to resign when he was selected by the Tories as their parliamentary candidate for the safe seat of Eastleigh. Now his old chums at the *Economist* have come to his rescue, offering him a job as a reporter of the paper's UK section.

Not everyone is happy with this arrangement. "If the BBC thinks it shouldn't employ him, why should we?" one hack grumbled. One solution suggested that Milligan should cover only "non-political" subjects. However, since almost everything in the *Economist* is directly or indirectly related to politics, this means that at the moment the poor man is left twiddling his thumbs. Perhaps the paper should start a gardening column for him.



THE TOP Tory most shocked by the resignation of Sir Geoffrey Howe was foreign secretary Douglas Hurd. His opinion of himself has been growing hugely as press and television praise his "coolness" (ie inactivity) in the Gulf crisis.

Hurd has convinced himself and his circle that he should be the next Tory prime minister, but his world was shattered by the Howe resignation (no doubt Howe, who detests Hurd — and Major — for taking his job soon after he was booted out by Thatcher last year, timed his resignation to hurt them both as much as possible).

Hurd is now wetting his pants in case Michael Heseltine stands against Thatcher later this month. If Heseltine were to win the vote among Tory MPs and dislodge Thatch from No 10, that would be the end of Hurd's ambitions for ever (and Major's as well, for that matter). Hurd has therefore thrown his full weight "in the interests of party unity" against an election this month, hoping the issue will be left until later, when his popularity (now at zero in the party and the country) will have improved.

Stand by, then, for a flow of cautious, homely advice from the foreign secretary on the importance of not splitting the party at this stage followed by an anxious decision to stand himself — and split the party still further — if Heseltine runs.

WHILE the Government bickered over child benefit, the absurd Peter Bottomley — now a humble backbencher for Eltham — popped up on the BBC and ITN with routine expressions of concern for the family.

"When the prime minister gets involved things go right," he told hacks following the pathetic "up-rating". In truth, the only thing Thatch has got right this year was sacking Bumley from the Northern Ireland Office. Most insultingly, she failed even to appoint a minister to replace him and promoted his popular wife Virginia in the same reshuffle.

Bumley is, however, not solely dependent on a backbencher's meagre salary. In a quiet move, Ulster secretary Peter Brooke returned him to the government pay roll by making him his PPS just weeks after Thatcher's axe fell. What lies behind this daring act of defiance is unknown, as is the extent of Bumley's workload.

Following the sacking his department was broken up and those civil servants working for Bumley were dispatched elsewhere. Thanks to Brooke's initiative he can still enjoy the odd trip to Belfast's many excellent restaurants and — as a serious student of the ways of Arslikhan, may even make it back as a minister.

A SLUSH fund scandal involving tens of thousands of pounds is emerging in Birmingham's Small Heath constituency as the meeting to choose Labour MP Denis Howell's successor fast approaches.

The national party has approved the meeting going ahead despite irrefutable evidence of bribery, intimidation and vote-rigging (see *Eye* 752).

The latest allegations involve a private letter written to constituency chairman Mac Baker by Roger Godsiff, the General, Municipal and Boilermakers' Union organiser who is a close friend of Howell's and has since emerged as his favoured successor.

Baker read the letter, apparently by accident, to a constituency meeting in April 1989. It said the union APEX had spent huge amounts of money in Small Heath. Minutes taken in the meeting record a sum of £96,000 being mentioned. APEX and the GMB are closely linked and Godsiff has worked for both.

No one then knew of Howell's impending resignation. Constituency officials were alarmed by talk of such a huge sum, none of which had passed through the accounts. They asked Baker to circulate copies of the letter but it has since "disappeared". Now the officers are wondering if the money existed and if so who has been paid for what. Several officers are known to be receiving "honoriariums".

Meanwhile libel writs are flying as Godsiff seemingly tries to stifle all opposition. The first was against Ron Wigley, the constituency's elderly and gentle membership officer, over party election leaflets. The second was against a more formidable opponent, city solicitor and fellow party member Tony Rust. More of him later.

Godsiff's experience in "organising" Labour Party selection procedures goes back a long way. In 1982 he organised the ousting of Tony Benn from his Bristol constituency. Documents saved from a meeting at a Bristol hotel on 23 November 1981 show that the same tactics were used then as are now emerging in Small Heath.

The local party was packed with delegates from right-wing unions such as APEX, the GMB and the electricians' union, the EETPU. Many delegates were not even members of the union said to have nominated them. The delegates, mostly pals of Godsiff's gang, were told they need not even attend meetings — the union officers would take their cards and vote for them.

Tony Benn has carefully avoided public comment on Godsiff's latest activities but is known to refer to him as "that bastard". A meticulous diarist, he keeps a special file devoted to Godsiff and Bristol.

Several well-known right-wing Labour party figures are said to have reason to be grateful to "Mr Fix-it" Godsiff. John Gilbert's seat in Dudley and Ann Davis's seat on the party's NEC are said to owe something to him.

Now Godsiff wants to be an MP himself and plans to abandon the Labour Party's union block vote system means his time-honoured methods may soon be redundant. Small Heath is one of the safest seats in the country and Godsiff means to have it, whatever local members may think.

Some months before Howell announced his retirement, Small Heath received a flood of union delegates from APEX, the GMB and the EETPU — all Godsiff's old friends. The number of delegates a union can have depends on the number of members it has in a given constituency. In Small Heath the unions claimed more members than they had in the whole city, but the trusting constituency officers were delighted at the sudden rise in attendance and welcomed them.

The penny only dropped when Howell announced his retirement. That meant the selection committee was frozen in its by then pro-Godsiff form. The three other candidates, city councillors Muhammad Afzal, Najma Hafeez and Stewart Stacey, were so infuriated that they buried their considerable differences to call in solicitor Tony Rust.

His detective work revealed the depths of the plot but the national party has chosen to ignore the dossier he compiled, alleging that up to 23 union delegates were bogus. Godsiff is now suing Rust for libel over the claims in that dossier but Rust refuses to back down and is issuing a counter-writ.

Joyce Gould, the party's national organiser, has told Small Heath to proceed with its selection meeting on 11 November. Ironically, Armistice Day could be the occasion for some of the party's worst blood-letting yet.

"Sorry, luvvy, I've dried..."

LABOUR MPs are finding it hard to keep track of Peter Mandelson's diverse intellectual interests.

On leaving his old job, Labour's erstwhile campaign guru took a well-paid consultancy post to "increase my knowledge of industrial matters". This was followed by an offer, gladly accepted, as a BBC adviser. Mandelson has now found a sudden fascination for foreign affairs as well.

Hartlepool's parliamentary candidate is flying off this week for an expenses-paid conference in Brazil. The men with the greenbacks are the influential US-based Council for Foreign Affairs. While the presence of Labour's junior foreign office shadow in Brazil, the highly-respected George Robertson MP, is understandable, the reason for the council's subsidy of Mandelson is not immediately clear.

'Backbiter'

GREAT CONMEN OF TODAY: POLLY PECK III

MS ALSING DALY, personal assistant to Polly Peck's embattled chairman Asil Nadir, recently received a telephone call from a person claiming to be a private detective usually employed by Swiss banks.

The caller, a Mr Paul, said he had been hired by some Greek Cypriots to bug Polly Peck's office. Not surprisingly, Ms Daly was greatly interested by this and gave Mr Paul her personal telephone number.

Mr Paul then telephoned Michael Walters, a financial hack on the *Daily Mail* who is well known as an admirer of Nadir and was interested in the tale. As evidence of the bugging, Mr Paul volunteered the number of Ms Daly. Having decided that the number checked out, Walters gave other numbers to Mr Paul and, as a result, he was able to get through to the company's corporate lawyers, Robert Burrows, and a man called Harrel.

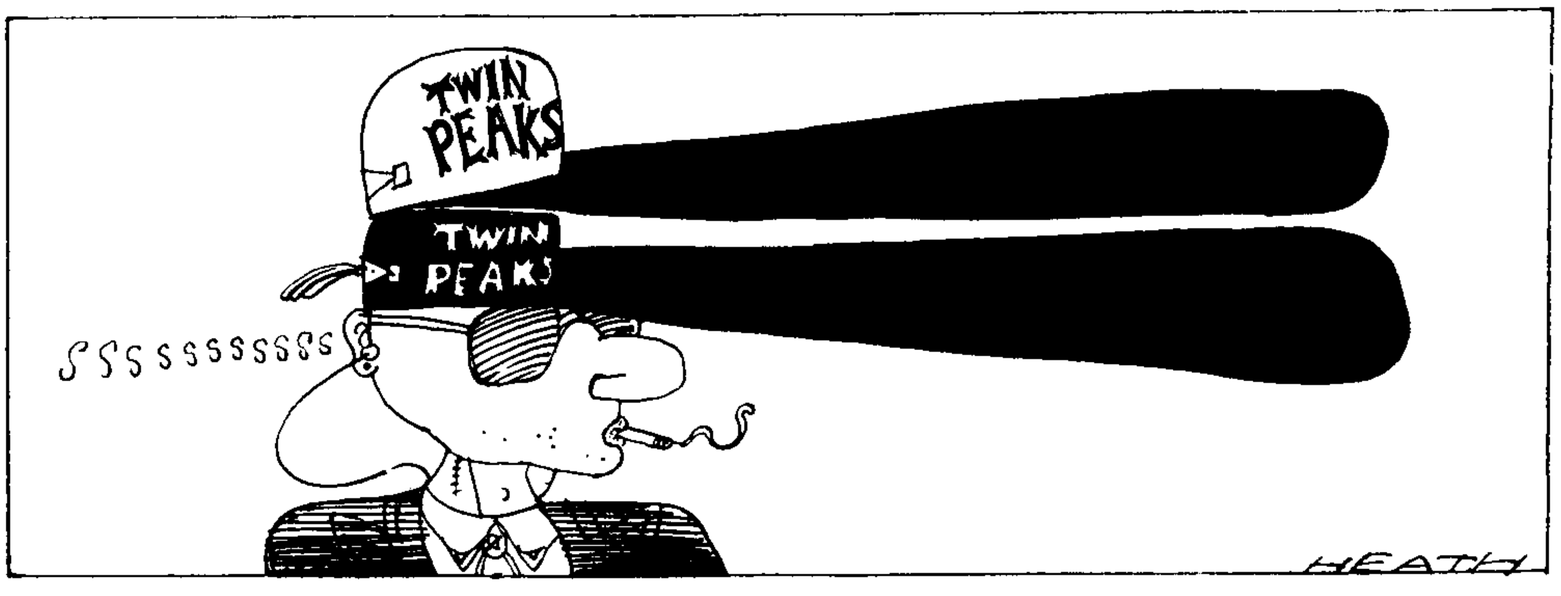
After several conversations the Polly Peck lawyers flew out on the corporate jet to Madrid and met with Mr Paul in the Princess Amelia Hotel on Tuesday 9 October. By now Mr Paul had become Mr Hunter and for a fee of £750 in fifties he provided documents and diagrams of the bugging equipment allegedly used.

If these documents seemed a little familiar, it was because they have been used before. And it was the *Sunset Times*'s City editor, Jeff Randle, who first bought them. Then, as now, they purported to show a bugging. When Randle purchased them it was Alan Bond supposedly being bugged by Tiny Rowland. This time it was Asil and chums being bugged by some unspecified Greeks.

On both occasions, the *Eye* can reveal, the real bugger was none other than international conman Joe Flynn who has again relieved the gullible of some of their money.

NUMERO UNO

MICHAEL HEATH



Grovel

THOUSANDS of single women the length and breadth of Britain will be distraught, I fear, to learn that my old friend Jeremy Paxman, dashing and combative presenter of BBC2's *Newsnight*, has secretly married.

Colleagues on *Newsnight* were astonished recently when Jeremy invited them to join him for a drink in a wine bar; but they were utterly flabbergasted when he announced that he had plighted his troth to long-suffering companion Liz Clough.

Never again will Britain's womanhood hear such memorable Paxo chat-up lines as: "When you've been under fire in Beirut, how important it is not to waste time."

I AM somewhat disturbed to read a strange letter that has been sent to several public schools by David Cope, the headmaster of Marlborough.

"Dear Head," he writes. "There was a lengthy report in the *Daily Express* the other day concerning a recent incident at the College. It claimed that a girl was attacked and stripped almost naked by a group of boys in front of 100 pupils. This was a scandalous and damaging distortion of the truth and I want to give you the facts."

Oddly, the "facts" as given by Cope seem only to confirm that the *Express* story was largely true. As he tells it, the incident happened while boys and girls from the school were watching a Sunday evening football match. "A small group of boys in the Hundred, in a mood of appallingly misjudged adolescent ragging, did briefly rag a girl. Two items of her clothing above her waist, including her bra, were torn."

In his letter, Cope goes on to reassure his fellow heads that the attackers were not "acting out of malice nor from sexual motivation". The incident, he desperately insists, "is in no way indicative of a general problem in the school... Indeed part of the unhappiness for all of us lies in the fact that it was so utterly untypical of Marlburians."

A likely story! In fact, violent "raggings" have been going on at the school since the dawn of time. Perhaps Cope thinks his fellow heads will be unaware of the passage in *Summoned by Bells* in which John Betjeman describes his own days at Marlborough. "Twelve to one:/What chance had Angus? They surrounded him,/Pulled off his coat and trousers, socks and shoes/And, wretched in his shirt, they hoisted him/Into the huge wastepaper basket; then/Poured ink and treacle on his head..."

So utterly untypical of Marlburians?

NAIM ATALLAH's massively expensive book launch is paying dividends (even if at £20,000 this works out to be a grand per copy sold).

It generated not only a slavish piece by Anneka-Rice lookalike Kate Saunders in the *Sunday Times*, but an appearance for Naim-Dropper on Radio 4's *Start the Week*.

Naim plugged his book which, as the programme's host Melvyn Bragg explained, consists of interviews with 29 important men. This innocent observation provoked another guest, Sir Robin Day, to declare that none of the men in the book is important, in particular Michael Aspel. Surely Sir Robin is not suggesting that Aspel should have been excluded because he is a mere television personality?

Pseuds Corner

"I am one of the best journalists in Britain, and have been for a long time. I have an amazing knowledge of life, a fantastic memory and I understand how the upper classes tick. There is no facet of English life of which I am not totally aware and cannot tell you about at length.

NIGEL DEMPSTER
Options

People used to look on Private Eye as a rabble who poked fun at their betters, and tee-hee, I was the only person who had any position in society. 'Grovel' of Private Eye worked on a decent newspaper; his wife was a duke's daughter; he appeared on television and was a public person.

NIGEL DEMPSTER
Singular Encounters

During the Goldsmith case, I was the centre-forward, very much taking on Goldsmith and his gang because I was on the same level as them, so to speak.

NIGEL DEMPSTER
Singular Encounters

[Paul Johnson] is a terrible snob, the sort of person who'd be oiling up to my wife's father if he were alive. He'd have loved to have met the Duke of Leeds.

NIGEL DEMPSTER
Singular Encounters

Ever since I went to deb dances in 1959, I've known a world which is populated by people who, if not aristocratic, are related to the aristocracy, simply because that is the tribe. When you mix at a certain level, it becomes almost impossible not to marry someone who isn't related to the aristocracy. It's just coincidence that, of the two women I've fallen in love with, one had a mother who was titled and the other had a title of her own.

NIGEL DEMPSTER
Singular Encounters

...we had a tremendously spirited discussion. It's curious that it should have been about Jimmy Goldsmith, who now lives a couple of hundred yards from me."

NIGEL DEMPSTER
Singular Encounters

CONTRIBUTOR: E. Strobes.

£10 paid for entries

● *AT A fashionable West End luncheon table I encounter my old friend Anthony Haden-Guest, the original of Peter Fallon in Bonfire of the Vanities, who is "passing through" on his way to the Lebanon.*

He tells me he has had an urgent tip-off that Terry Waite is about to be released and that Tina Brown of Vanity Fair magazine in New York wants him to cover the momentous event.

That's his story, anyway. But in fact there is a rather less dashing explanation for his sudden flight to the Middle East. Anthony's financial affairs are so chaotic that the Internal Revenue Service in America now carries out a strict "audit" on all the expenses he claims against tax. Thus if he says that he spent $300 at a New York hotel, the IRS investigators will go to the hotel and check the records. Even on foreign trips, it seems, they are in hot pursuit — with one exception: the IRS has told its staff that, for their own safety, they mustn't check any expenses incurred in Beirut.

AT LAST one of the most jealously-guarded secrets of Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill's boudoir has been revealed.

Earlier this year, a brown-nosing profile of the *Sunset Times* editor in *GQ* described him as having a florid complexion that looks as if "it has been enhanced on a sunbed". Curiously Neill objected vehemently to this figurative observation and wrote to the magazine to complain about this and other matters stating firmly that he had never been on a sunbed.

And there the matter rested. Until, that is, the *Sunday Times Magazine* published an article displaying the garbage of certain celebrities. This was followed by a similar exercise in *Punch* magazine (*What that? Ed.*), only this time the garbage came from Andrew Neill's flat. Among the various items discovered was a used tube of Clinique skin bronzer.

Andrew has, meanwhile, been demonstrating that he has a remarkably thick skin as well as a bronzed one. Despite a furious and public falling-out with publishing glamour-puss Caroline Michel, after they had walked out together (and that was *all* they did, she was keen to make clear) Neill has just offered her a job on the *Sunday Times*.

As *what*, exactly, she was not clear; but La Michel had had quite enough of "Brillo's" suggestions for one lifetime...

● *I HEAR the impoverished journal Tribune has been stunned by a solicitor's letter from fatcat Soho lawyers Wright Webb Syrett.*

The letter threatened action over a classified advertisement which read: "Lost, one MP. Balding. Answers to name of George but also known as Gorgeous." Readers were asked to call two telephone numbers, one of which was that of the Groucho Club and the other that of the Aliens Office.

This harmless piece of fun at the expense of George Galloway MP (he of "War on Want" fame) failed to amuse Galloway, who has pompously decided his reputation as a fantastically diligent constituency MP and generally important and serious national figure has been damaged. He has therefore instructed Wright, Olde, Crooks accordingly. Grow up, George.

Pip Pip!

NOOKS and CORNERS

IN *EYE* 752, I illustrated a Classical pile of deep vulgarity and illiteracy designed by the Hitchman Stone Partnership of Warwick. Now I learn that this distinguished firm of *pasticheurs* has even greater ambitions to "extend and enhance the period character of Leamington Spa", for it has plans to demolish 75 percent of the (listed) Royal Pump Rooms & Baths to make way for a period development of their own.

How can this be, you might ask, when the Pump Room has been in the ownership of the town since 1867? The answer, of course, is that the present guardians of the Pump Room — Warwick District Council — cares little for the public, is all for privatisation and, besides, is besotted with the Hitchman Stone Partnership, as its approval of "Sovereign Court" has already demonstrated.

Originally a Regency building, the Pump Rooms were altered and enlarged by the Victorian architects John Cundall and W.L. de Normanville. The Pump Rooms, of course, put the Spa into Royal Leamington Spa which today is almost the only working spa in the country. Yet the ambition of this Conservative-controlled local authority is only to get rid of the thing, to sell it off.

For five years, a little band of devoted asset-stripping Thatcherites has been determined to push ahead with the scheme cooked up by Hitchman Stone together with an orthopaedic surinventor, de Normanville. A new plan, the building would be leased to Professional Parks Ltd for 125 years, leaving the council to enjoy a profit and yet be relieved of the responsibility of maintaining the 25 percent of historic fabric in the listed building that these gracious architects may spare. Unfortunately, however, just as the original backer for the scheme withdrew, so has the present backer, which rather suggests that the idea is not as profitable as the good councillors think.

SINKING FEELING: The original Pump Room, left, and the private hospital that would replace two Victorian swimming pools, right

But there is worse. Although the legal status of the charitable trust upon which the district council holds the Pump Rooms has yet to be determined, the public spirited councillors have already managed to close the swimming pool added to the Pump Room in 1888-90 by the local engineer, architect and swimming pool has been built on the edge of town, which may or may not be a public boon, but it is difficult not to believe that the real purpose of this move was to clear the site for the Tansey-Hitchman Stone redevelopment. And it is not just de Normanville's Winter Hall and Baths that are threatened with demolition and mutilation, for John Cundall's Ladies' Pool is also in the way of creating a private hospital in what was intended to be a public building.

Normally a local authority must apply to the secretary of state rather than grant itself listed building consent for its own developments. In this case, Messrs Professional Parks Ltd merely submitted a conventional listed building consent application to the local authority, that is, to none other than Warwick District Council which, of course, has a financial interest in the matter. But this devious ploy to avoid a tiresome obligation has now been scuppered by the developer's withdrawal.

Now the council says it will consider alternatives — providing they meet the council's objectives, which include the demolition of the Victorian buildings in the complex. Not only does this contravene the DoE's Circular 8/87, which requires local authorities "to set an example to other owners by making a diligent search for a new use and, if necessary, a new owner... before seeking consent to demolish"; it also negates the Leamington town centre local plan adopted by Warwick District Council in 1986: "Listed buildings of architectural or historic interest shall be retained as far a possible and only in exceptional circumstances will their demolition be permitted." No convincing reason has been advanced for these demolitions and a structural survey of the Pump Rooms made in 1984 showed that all the buildings could be restored and refurbished for £1 million.

Imagining the year 2034, Tom Wolfe once portrayed a terrifying vision of "Heritage Industry" Britain of the future, with historic cities consisting of plastic facades designed by Quinlan Terry Associates and imported form Taiwan. Warwick District Council seems determined to realise that vision here and now, with most of Regency Leamington Spa being designed by the Hitchman Stone Partnership.

'Piloti'

THE WALLACE AFFAIR (Contd)

CONFLICTING judicial opinion on whether MI5 is subject to the ordinary laws of the land is being put to the test yet again, this time in the latest episode of the Colin Wallace saga.

In his report in September, David Calcutt QC, Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge, revealed that the chairman of the Civil Service appeals board had been nobbled by employees of the Ministry of Defence before his board heard Wallace's appeal against his sacking by the army in 1975.

Wallace and his lawyer believed this smacked of a conspiracy to pervert the course of justice and alerted Scotland Yard. On 1 November, Wallace was interviewed at length by a Detective Superintendent Seare, a top Yard officer who has just finished a long investigation into the murder of Julie Ward in Kenya. The superintendent said he was keen to pursue the case vigorously and wanted to interview Mr Calcutt about his evidence and to identify the MoD nobblers to ask them for an explanation of their behaviour.

Mr Seare is, however, a realist with a long experience of dealing with the security services. He has therefore written to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) asking, in effect, if there is any point in carrying out a public investigation if the CPS and the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) are only going to throw it in the rubbish bin.

Mr Seare has asked for an undertaking that both bodies will keep an open mind on prosecution until the results of his investigation are known; or whether they will not prosecute in any circumstances, in which case there is little point in continuing.

The letter will cause some embarrassment at the DPP and the CPS. For if, as seems likely, the appeals board nobblers were courageous patriots from MI5 (determined to chuck Wallace out of the army because he refused to subvert the Government he was meant to be serving and because he wanted to stop child abuse at Kincora Boys' Home) the difficulty of prosecuting MI5 officers for anything at all will emerge once again.

In the Stalker investigation into the Royal Ulster Constabulary, for example, vital information was denied to Stalker by MI5. When he insisted on it he was smeared, removed from the investigation and suspended from his job. In the RUC's own "investigation" of Kincora, police officers who asked to interview an MI5 officer who had called off a previous inquiry were advised that they were whistling in the wind.

The same advice is likely to be passed down, discreetly as ever, to Superintendent Seare. He may not take too kindly to it. Some senior officers at Scotland Yard are discussing what they see as a good chance to put a stop to the "ridiculous lawlessness" of the security services.

PRISON NEWS

PRISONERS who have given up hope of ever getting redress for continuously degrading treatment should take heart from the case of Bernard Kay, currently confined at Frankland prison, Durham.

In April 1988 Kay was in Full [*sic*] Sutton prison, where a number of prisoners told him that paint was falling from a cracked ceiling into the food. The paint was highly toxic. On 5 April, Mr Kay made a formal complaint about the food and on the 11th he complained again to three members of the Full Sutton board of visitors.

The visitors took samples of the paint supplied by Mr Kay, but nothing has been published about any forensic tests they may or may not have ordered. Mr Kay said he would refuse to eat the food until something was done to discover whether he and his colleagues had run any serious risk from the paint.

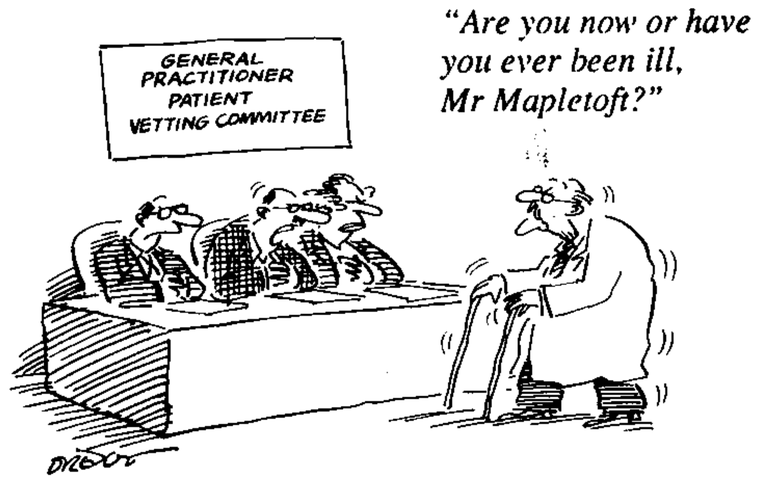
The reaction of the authorities was to assume Bernard Kay was mad. Twice seen by a prison psychiatrist, in May 1988 he was taken to the hospital wing at Armley jail, Leeds, for what he was told was to be a more detailed psychiatric examination. On arrival one of the officers said: "By the time we have finished with you, you will be glad to crawl back to Full Sutton."

This prediction was handsomely vindicated. The "psychiatric treatment" appears to have been composed of stripping Mr Kay naked in a damp cell with nothing on but a canvas jacket, not unlike a straitjacket.

Mr Kay heard from other prisoners that this "psychiatric treatment" for prisoners who complained about food in Yorkshire prisons was quite common and he promptly sued the Home Office.

On 18 June this year a report was submitted by H.A. McClelland, consultant psychiatrist at the University of Newcastle, which concluded: "I would consider that as a result of the Leeds prison hospital episode this man did experience a stress disorder from which he has not recovered." Mr McClelland also opined that the treatment handed out to Kay at Leeds was "extremely stressful particularly to a man in late middle years".

The Home Office, in some panic, offered Mr Kay a settlement in which they would pay him £5,000 without admitting liability, if he shut up. Mr Kay refused. He continued his action for damages. Now the Law Society has stepped in to help out the Home Office, and, despite strong legal opinion that Mr Kay has a good case, has denied him legal aid. As he has no money, he cannot continue.



I-SKY

● WHAT'S the difference between BSE (Mad Cow Disease) and BSB?
A: Humans can get BSE.

The Sun

CONTRIBUTOR: Carl Hackma.

An occasional column for which readers are invited to submit Sky-plugs masquerading as news items in Murdoch papers. The usual £10 will be paid.

MEDIA NEWS

WITH THE Dirty Digger's News International facing an acute debt crisis, it will be interesting to see if the following furious complaints to the *Eye* about sales and customer service practices at Sky's HQ in Livingston, Scotland, are investigated by the new clean Sky-BSB merged outfit.

● It is common practice for Sky not to cancel contracts even when a subscriber writes or telephones repeatedly for several months to try to cancel and arrange a time for equipment to be collected. If a subscriber tries to cancel by phone, telephonists are instructed to obtain a phone number so Sky salesmen can "talk" the unfortunate person into changing his or her mind.

● Sky salesmen regularly take signatures from whoever answers the door. While this may secure their commission, many subscribers have equipment installed without the prior knowledge or consent of the head of the household.

● Sky's letters claiming unpaid and often disputed arrears are signed by a Mr Hollis or Alan Dawson. These are both fictional characters. Irate customers asking for either of them will invariably be placed "on hold" for up to 15 minutes before being told (if they are still holding) that the named person is out of the office.

● Despite a clause in the contract stating that service calls will be carried out "within 48 hours under normal circumstances", subscribers often have to wait for up to three months for repairs. Appointments are frequently broken, with customers sometimes taking several days off work. Installation and the sending out of the smartcards to de-scramble the movie channel's signal are similarly delayed.

● Salesmen often promise rental customers either the smaller black satellite dish or the dish with an imitation brick pattern, along with the SRD 400 receiver/decoder in one box. The supply of these smaller dishes and SRD 400s is very restricted and they are usually sold rather than rented. Sky engineers will install the larger white dish and two boxes (receiver and decoder) while the head of the household who ordered the more discreet version is at work.

IT APPEARS that the birth of Jonathan Ross's new early evening chat show has not been without severe complications at the Channel X TV production offices.

The pilot was such a complete disaster that one C4 executive said after its screening that he "was surprised that Mother Teresa wasn't there to offer comfort to the victims".

It is ironic that C4, having decided to challenge the fading BBC *Wogan* show, has imported an entire production team straight from the BBC. Most of the staff were lured from Radio 4's *Loose Ends* programme (under the aegis of Ian Gardhouse as senior producer), the prosaic Saturday morning debacle hosted by Ned "Twinky" Sherrin who is delighted to interview any octogenarian thespians able to carry their own ventilators into the studio and utter the phrases: "Darling...", "more puffy-puffy" and "dear sweet Noel".

The rigours of producing three shows a week require the combined talents of the old *Last Resort* and the new BBC teams, and the fur has started to fly. The TV team contemptuously refers to Ian Gardhouse as "Grandad" and his acolytes as "the flared trouser brigade". Meanwhile, the radio team (so sharp its members risk cutting themselves on their own tongues) lash back with such searing retorts as "sticks and stones" and "it takes one to know one".

It might have been suspected that this conflict was cunningly masterminded by Channel X's well-connected boss, Katy Landor, in order to produce a few creative sparks for the new series. Those who saw the first programme on Guy Fawkes' night might feel Ms Landor, having lit the blue touchpaper, should now retire immediately.

BERNARD CLARK, the media magnate whose Clark Productions makes *Hard News* for Channel 4, has just bought the ailing listings title *City Limits*.

Set up in the early 1980s by dissident *Time Out* staff who disagreed with proprietor Tony Elliot's decision to abandon pay parity, *City Limits* still pays each of its employees the same salary — £9,500.

As a jest the notoriously stingy Clark wandered into the *Hard News* office and announced to the hacks and hackettes that from now on they too would be paid the same salary as *City Limits* staff.

The *Hard News* team could barely contain their amazement. Surely, they wondered, the enormously talented, breathtakingly beautiful and infinitely popular Michal Levin would not be forced to eke out a meagre living in company with such humble creatures as themselves.

Peter Carter-Ruck and Partners

AN ITEM in our last issue about *World in Action*'s investigation into the career of David Hart made reference to well-known solicitors Peter Carter-Ruck and Partners and Mr Pepper, a partner in that firm.

It has been pointed out to us that our article may have been interpreted as suggesting that Mr Pepper and his firm had hired a private investigator to commit criminal offences. We wish to make it clear that we never intended to make any such suggestion (which would be totally unjustified) and apologise to Mr Pepper and his firm for any false impression imparted by the article.

PRIVATE EYE'S

OWN SPLENDID FULL COLOUR CHRISTMAS CARDS
Charles & Diana, The Thatchers and Cap'n Bob Maxwell, are now on sale available only by mail order and as a special offer — FREE cards to new subscribers.
See insert in middle pages for details.

BEHIND THE SCENES

A SHORT quiz for dance enthusiasts. The definition of Dance Umbrella is:

1 A chance for Londoners to experience the very best in modern dance.

2 An opportunity for a lot of young men to shave their heads and wiggle pert buttocks out of time with the music.

Stephen Petronio, a highly rated performer from the "buttock wiggling" school of dance, opened this year's Umbrella with a performance highly recommended by Arslikhan's young dance guru Michael Clark.

"I love Stephen Petronio," gushed Clark. "I've been following him and his work since we met in Glasgow last summer... It's powerful, passionate and provocative with a breadth of vision matched only by my own." Tongue in cheek perhaps — but whose tongue and in which cheek, one wonders.

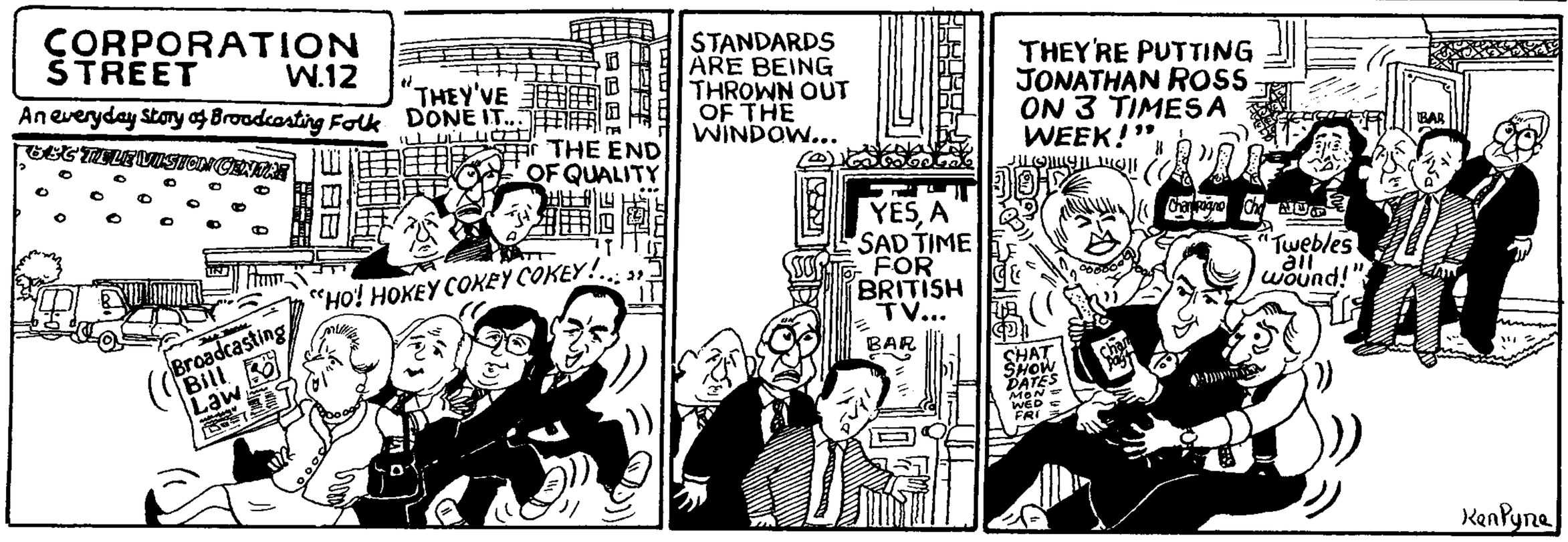
When the Dance Umbrella audience of young men and women with shaved heads assembled for the promised passion and provocation, their own less-than pert bottoms soon began to wiggle impatiently as it became clear they had paid £8.00 for a long session of mobile foreplay.

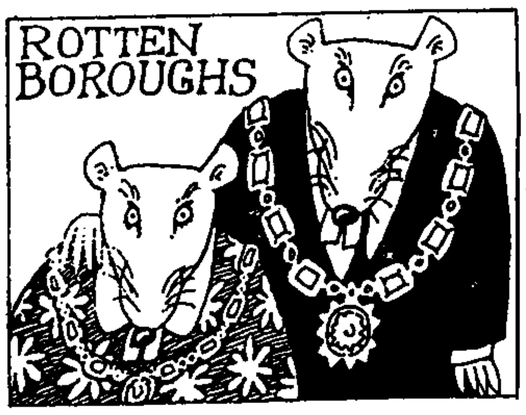
Indeed, with only one act of simulated buggery in the first half the interval arrived with a distinct air of unfulfillment. The enthusiasm quickly rallied, however, for Petronio's new piece (featuring, coincidentally, his principal fan Michael Clark as a special guest), *MiddleSex Gorge*. This is not a reference to oral sex for hermaphrodites. Backstabber does not know to what it is a reference as the work featured people running on and off stage in corsets. The lucky ones wore tights with fluffy bits, too.

Another highlight of Dance Umbrella is the Group Emile Dubois. To avoid any further disappointment, it has come clean and admitted that Emile does not in fact have any buttocks at all — he does not exist.

The French group promises to set new dance on its head. Gone is the *angst* and *weltschmerz*; in comes the jolly evening out. Entitled *Les mystères du Subal*, the work is about a group of sailors who arrive on a mythical isle and have a good time — on second thoughts perhaps they are not turning new dance on its head after all.

'Backstabber'


CORPORATION STREET W.12
An everyday story of Broadcasting Folk
"THEY'VE DONE IT... THE END OF QUALITY ..."
BBC TELEVISION CENTRE
Broadcasting Bill Law
"HO! HOKEY COKEY COKEY!..."
STANDARDS ARE BEING THROWN OUT OF THE WINDOW...
YES, A SAD TIME FOR BRITISH TV...
BAR
THEY'RE PUTTING JONATHAN ROSS ON 3 TIMES A WEEK!"
Champagne
"Twebles all wound!"
CHAT SHOW DATES MON WED FRI
Ken Pyne



DURHAM

OUR OLD friend "Don" Robson, dynamic leader of Durham County Council, never gives up.

Stopped from covering Aykley Heads (*Eyes passim*) with offices and hotels by Chris Patten, the environment secretary, who served an Article 14 notice preventing the county council granting itself planning permission without the secretary of state's authorisation, Robson has now submitted a revised scheme along with an obliging "environmental impact statement" hastily commissioned from the Derek Lovejoy Partnership.

But what of the earlier Shankland Cox report which "recommended most strongly that the various development proposals for Aykley Heads estate should not be considered in isolation of [*sic*] one another"? That document took a curiously long time to emerge into the light, for it was first submitted to the county council in December 1989 but only released in June 1990. It originally recommended that nothing be built on the "green wedge and conservation area". That was not what our Don wanted to hear, so back it was sent to London. A second draft did not please him either, so a third, more positive document was requested from Shankland Cox — and received.

OLDHAM

LABOUR-controlled Oldham has hit on a wizard scheme to extract every drop of poll tax cash from its hapless inhabitants.

Women living alone in the town's shanty-like terraced back-to-backs have been sent *two* poll tax demands, one for them and one for an alleged co-habitee with the same surname as the householder.

Hundreds of such erroneous charges were binned by the borough's puzzled moorland dwellers until a double bill landed on Councillor Margaret Riley's doorstep. Riley was miffed at being asked to pay £365 for a non-existent "Eric Riley" whom the town hall claimed lived with her!

The tireless Labour member investigated the cock-up and discovered that zealous poll tax officers had been comparing previous electoral rolls with new lists of poll taxpayers and discovered that hundreds of men had gone "missing" from the latest register.

So, households which had suddenly become "women only" were sent an extra bill — for the defaulting "husband". But cocky staff ruined their own ruse by going over the top and pairing off *all* women living alone — even if they had to invent a man's name to do it — in a bid to catch slow-witted absconders. It is not known whether council leaders had put them on commission.

HILLINGDON

THE chancellor's plea for public officials to exercise restraint with pay awards appears to have fallen on deaf ears in Tory-controlled Hillingdon.

Forced to cut £29 million from this year's budget, the council's top seven directors recently sacked 368 members of staff and lined up hundreds more posts for the chop.

But to soothe the pain of making the redundancies Hillingdon's top brass have awarded themselves £35,000 — £5,000 a man — for carrying out the awful task. With an astonishing lack of compassion council leaders have defended the increase as payment for "increased productivity".

Just to rub it in, the borough bosses launched this cynical attack during a massive lunchtime "session" above the Crown and Treaty hostelry in Uxbridge, oblivious to the fury of Labour group leader Brian Hudson who was searching the town hall in vain for the axe-wielding officers.

Surprisingly, two directors were later overcome by their consciences and refused the gift.

And coincidentally, while the controversial pay increases were going through, the ruling Tory councillors were awarding themselves a massive 70 per cent increase in town hall expenses.

EASTLEIGH

THE hitherto scandal-free Hampshire borough of Eastleigh has hit a spot of bother over its municipal litter and street cleaning company, Eastleigh Contracting Services (ECS).

To poll taxpayers' horror, the wholly council-owned subsidiary has announced losses of more than half a million pounds for the last financial year.

The massive losses were so unexpected they even took company chairman councillor Philip Spearey by surprise — but not so the two senior ECS managers who set up their own rival private firm, Hampshire Contracting Services, while still working for ECS.

The pound shortfall means Eastleigh's rustic citizenry could each have to cough up an extra £68 poll tax next year as well as suffering £1.5 million worth of cuts. They now want to know why ECS officers underbid their tenders by as much as £70,000 in their desperation to win council contracts.

Typically, ECS's fiscal plight only came to light via a leaked "secret" report which showed that the losses had been mounting for nine months while the company had been using lax accounting methods, breaking the Goods and Services Act, allowing sub-contractors to fill in their own payments sheets, and sitting back while officers made off with goods bought with company money.

Worse still, the council's Liberal Democrat leader Margaret Kyrle had ignored warnings about ECS' position because the allegations had come from an anonymous source. Such reticence cut little ice with the council's opposition members. Labour and Tory councillors recently united to kick out the Liberal administration, leaving Eastleigh ruled by a rare red-and-blue coalition. It is not known whether the honeymoon will last long enough for Eastleigh's overflowing streets to be cleared of litter.

TRAVEL NEWS

OUR article on Annie Gloag's Stagecoach Holdings and her bus stations in Lewes and Keswick (*Eye* 752) rang more than a few bells in Cumbria.

Having virtually sewn up public transport in the area by acquiring CMS (Cumberland) and Ribble, Stagecoach's deals also resulted in an application by Gainsborough Holdings to develop Ambleside bus station with the usual high proportion of offices and shops. The scheme was turned down by the National Park planners and rejected following an appeal, referral to the secretary of state and a public inquiry despite some local attempts to revise the original proposal.

In May last year Gainsborough closed the bus station and in September sold the site to a London-based company, Flair Estates Ltd. Since then those buses and National Express coaches still serving the area have been using bus stops on narrow streets in the middle of this small town, which already suffers from severe traffic problems caused by tourist cars and coaches.

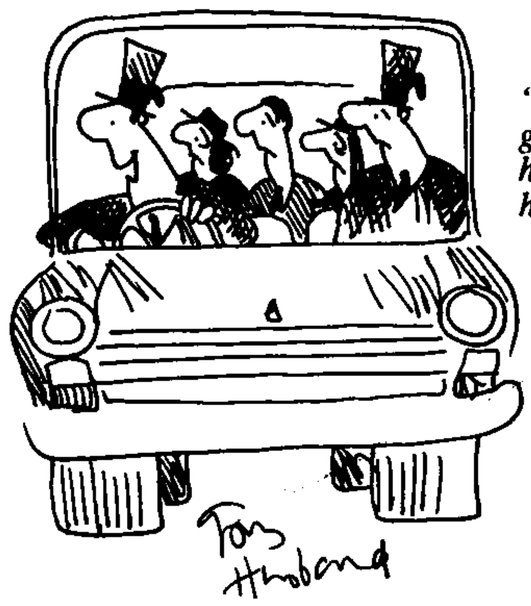
Ambleside is no longer particularly picturesque, but it is still one of the Lake District's "honeypot" sites which attracts huge numbers of motor vehicles. The congestion is not eased by the addition of loitering buses and coaches and nor is the mood of those who rely on "public" transport.

THE Civil Aviation Authority is considering a plea from Michael Bishop, the man behind the British Midland airline, to order his bigger rival British Airways to axe five flights a day between Heathrow and Glasgow.

Bishop is upset because British Midland is losing money on its flights between Heathrow and Scotland. Cutting ticket prices to encourage more passengers would apparently be too simple a solution, hence the request to the CAA.

Bishop also wants BA to be forced to "cap" — that is, to agree not to improve — services between Heathrow, Belfast and Edinburgh, the theory being that if there are fewer British Airways flights, passengers will be forced to travel on British Midland.

This will improve BM's load factor and profitability, enabling it to compete more effectively against Lord King's BA. The bureaucrats are taking the request seriously and the CAA's decision will be revealed later this month.



"The sun has got his hat on, hip hip hip hooray..."

POLICE NEWS

A YEAR after the death squad-style murder of six Jesuit priests at the Central American University in El Salvador, the local government is no nearer to bringing the nine military men accused of the crime to trial.

This will not surprise students of Central American banana republics. While the "authorities" comprise a pseudo-fascist regime dominated by a US-trained military riddled with death-squad activists capable of committing such murders, the police tend to be... well, as much a part of the problem as the solution.

This time, however, they have no excuse. For it was Britain's Inspector Knacker who gave the Salvadorean police all the evidence they needed. As part of the UK's contribution to what Douglas Hurd terms "emerging democracies", three Scotland Yard detectives were sent to show johnny foreigner how it's done.

Although embarrassed by the Salvadorean government's effusive praise just as the case of the Guildford Four was exposing their woeful shortcomings, Knacker's men did manage to point the finger in the right direction — at the military. Under extreme pressure from outraged US congressmen, many of whom knew the Jesuits personally, charges were finally brought.

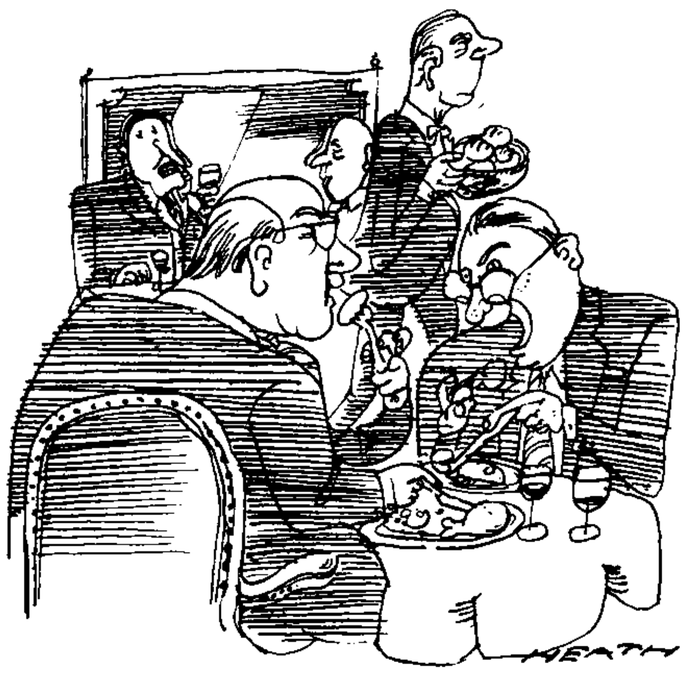
Colonel Guillermo Benavides, the director of the military school, has confessed nothing and will not, as things stand, be found guilty even if tried. There is a widespread conviction that "virgin boots" as he is known by his colleagues from the 1966 graduating military class has been bribed and bullied into taking the blame.

Anyone who knows anything about the Salvadorean army's command structure insists Benavides could not have acted without higher authority. Indeed, a group of anonymous senior officers have gone out of their way to stress this, pointing to the deputy defence minister, Colonel Orlando Zepeda.

He is a notorious hardliner who in 1987 had classified two of the six Jesuits as dangerous subversives. His deep personal hatred had been reinforced by their intensified efforts to negotiate a peace settlement the previous year.

It now seems the Scotland Yard report on the killings contained incriminating evidence against Zepeda and/or other members of the Salvadorean high command. At least one US journalist has been led to believe as much by a British diplomat who knew Knacker's men and was one of the few to see the report. There seems no other reason for the British Government to have refused to publish it, hiding as it did behind bland platitudes that the job was a private commission from the Salvadorean government.

And why, if the study is as praiseworthy of the local police's forensic and technical skills as some British officials have tried to make out, has the Salvadorean government — in need of every bit of credibility it can muster — refused to publish the findings?



"We must have lunch sometime"

Sally Deedes

EARLIER this year the National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) published a new report on radon, the odourless radioactive gas given off by decaying uranium in granite that is particularly prevalent in Devon and Cornwall.

The board recommended that the Government should adopt a new action level at which buildings should be made safe from the gas — 22 Becquerels per cubic metre as opposed to the previous measurement of 400 Becquerels.

While exposure to the gas increases the risk of developing lung cancer, the NRPB stresses that "exposure to radon in the home is not a matter for alarm about the inevitability of early effect on health but one of concern about the possibility of harmful consequences later in life."

Matthew Taylor, Labour MP for Truro, is one among many who feel that having publicised these health risks, the Government should also publicise the help that is available, organise grants for those undertaking remedial works to their homes and introduce a system of licensing to those "cashing in" on the problem.

In the West Country, where the radon threat is particularly serious, people are understandably reluctant to admit there might be a problem near their home since this may put off potential buyers. For example, the environmental health officer for West Devon has been quoted as saying that there has not been one application in his area for grants to fit anti-radon equipment.

The lack of any licensing system has allowed others to jump on the radon bandwagon. In August Mark Wilkinson, a Devon businessman, launched a company called Salway to provide radon gas detectors to the public for £23 after watching a television programme on the gas. Another company, National Radon Project (NRP — uncannily close to NRPB) of 42 Reeves Way, Wokingham, Berkshire, recently had a complaint against its advertisement for radon testing equipment — it said "Radon Causes cancer so don't put your families at risk" — upheld by the Advertising Standards Authority on the grounds that it was unnecessarily alarmist.

Both firms appear to be capitalising on people's fears and charging for a test which, few people are probably aware, is available for free. The Oxfordshire-based NRPB (tel: 0235 834590) will install detectors for free and will remind users to return the system for testing three months after installation.

However, having established that a house is above the limit, what can a householder do? The Department of the Environment publishes *The Householders Guide to Radon*, which gives many hints on how to make homes safe. But as Mr Taylor says: "It is not always an easy operation to perform. The Government should step in and supply properly trained people to carry out these works. If you get double glazing you know whether or not it is working. But it is a different matter with radon and the householder could easily get ripped off."

Some hope may be at hand for Mr Taylor's constituents. A spokesman from the DoE told me the NRPB had approved a course on anti-radon building methods, although no date had yet been fixed for its implementation, and other more courses were being considered.

DOWN ON THE FARM

with 'Old Muckspreader'

MARGARET Thatcher's ritual railing at the feather-bedding of farmers cuts little ice among her lieutenants in the shires. How else does one explain the extraordinary double standards being applied by Somerset councillor Bea Roberts and her Tory chums in their drive to bring the county's public services to penury?

Mrs Roberts, education committee chairwoman and wife of a former headmaster of Taunton School (fees £1,500 a term and the winner of an award for its catering), believes children in the state sector can manage without school dinners. So she is proposing to axe the service to save £1 million a year and shave a few pence off the poll tax.

Meanwhile she and her gang continue to put off a business deal which could net the county £100 million. While they have no qualms about chucking more than 800 school dinner ladies out of work, they won't risk upsetting traditional supporters in the farming community.

The county owns 153 farms, valued two years ago at £64 million. A local business consortium has offered to buy the estate, sell off a tiny part of it and give the county up to 90 per cent of any development profit.

Yet the Tory penny pinchers have put off a decision for the third time. It seems a council which cannot afford to maintain special needs teaching, outdoor education centres, school libraries or education for the rising fives can still chuck away millions playing landlord to 153 farmers.

Rather than offend the green welly brigade it would rather turn its back on a scheme that would fund school dinners for the next century.

IN THE FINAL weeks of his presidency, Sir Simon Gourlay, National Farmers' Union boss, has called out the troops for a last great battle to defend farm subsidies.

Once more Parliament Square is lined with red-faced chaps in tweed warning that the ending of state handouts would lead inevitably to the collapse of civilisation as they know it.

Readers may recall the last issue that brought farmers on to the streets. Six years ago the NFU told us that milk quotas would bring dairy farming to its knees. In fact by creating an artificial shortage and pushing up the price, quotas have sent dairy farmers chortling all the way to the bank.

Not surprisingly Sir Simon now wants controls slapped on other commodities. In effect he's asking the Government to create artificial shortages of meat and cereals so his members can grab the inflated prices and run.

Of course it's all done in the name of protecting the small family farmer. What isn't mentioned is that the present disastrous system — which has forced out thousands of small farmers over the past 20 years — has been supported throughout by the fat-cat barley barons who run the NFU.

Now that their profits are being squeezed they've begun to raise the spectre of "rural dereliction". After decades of ripping out hedgerows and drenching the soil with pesticides, a little neglect by the so-called "guardians of the countryside" would be the best thing possible for rural Britain.

WITH BRUSSELS doing so much to help Europe's animals there's scarcely any need for the RSPCA. So well disposed are the bureaucrats towards dairy cows, they're currently subsidising each one to the tune of £150 a year.

For sheep they're prepared to pay out £7 a year — unless, of course, they have to endure harsh hill conditions. In which case the poor beasts can pick up another £7 a head. As for the shell-shocked creatures of Northern Ireland, they're deemed to deserve £13 a head.

Now the kindly commissioners are to extend their largesse to Europe's budgerigars. In a step of heart-warming generosity they've introduced a new subsidy for farmers who grow canary seed and millet. It's all taxpayers' money, of course. But who among us would begrudge a little charity for our feathered friends?

Sporting Life

RECENT weeks have seen a string of great performances by a handful of the turf's most celebrated players. But racing is still racing, after all, which means that as well as the old maestros the old farts have been in action too.

It was entirely predictable that Lord Carnarvon should have chosen the week in which the fearsome Dick Hern came within inches of beating the Americans at their own game to confirm that there would be no royal reprieve for the major and that he most definitely would not be on the list of palace trainers in 1991. Instead, Brenda will go into next year's flat campaign dependent mainly on the services of the smooth-faced Hastings-Bass, whose mother Patricia is most upset that this column inaccurately described her boy as Lord Carnarvon's godson.

Quite right too. Since this summer Willie's new and correct title has been William Robin-Hood Hastings-Bass, 13th Earl of Huntingdon. Isn't it simply marvellous to see talent get its just reward? And now that he's got something useful to do with his time, will he finally give up the day job?

Willie, who couldn't witness the major's and Dayjur's performances at Belmont Park because of a prior engagement at the French St Leger, still won't be the sole royal trainer. The other short straw has again been allotted to the doleful Ian Balding who has hardly been a runaway success story himself in recent years. But as Balding (unlike his bespectacled, moonfaced brother Toby) is generally regarded as a decent bloke and not a fart, people try not to mention the subject too often.

One of the ironies of Balding's continued preferment is that these days he is only marginally more popular with Carnarvon than the major himself. This is because the old devil continues to suspect that it was the corinthian Balding who originally shopped his "Get Hern" plan to Bruffscott and the hacks back in 1989. Close observers of His Lordship's Highclere Castle weekend house parties have noticed that the clean-limbed Ian has been conspicuously absent from the social soirées and from the sporting occasions at which he once used to excel.

'Major Bonkers'

Letters

Private Eye

Lewd pseud

Sir,

Gavin Ewart's mucky brain
Has clearly dropped off down a drain
The above poème trouvé occurs in your intelligent reviewer's notice of The Faber Book of Blue Verse. Like Charles Dickens, he may be one of those prose-writers who unconsciously write in metre (blank verse pentameters in the case of Dickens).

I thought the Faber Blue Book was quite satisfying — "neat but not gaudy" — and free (as a friend put it) from "the covert, the creepy, the coy or the hearty".

"Cavety" does not exist, as your reviewer supposes. Cavafy did. Let your stern critic write a poem as good as "Eskimo Nell", in the style of Robert W Service. Nobody ever wrote that on a lavatory wall.

Yours etc.,
GAVIN EWART,

London SW15.

Obsession

Sir,

However justified your attack on the ludicrous claim of Dr Eric Griffiths that he could write a novel like A S Byatt's Possession; your own literary review was scarcely less ludicrous on the matter.

When Possession came out, Eye readers were treated to an absurd diatribe on its length, erudition and the fact that it took 507 pages before the main protagonists had sex. These sneers were subsequently repeated to me by the arts editor of one national newspaper and the literary editor of another; on being pressed, each admitted to not actually having read the book itself, just your "review".

You are right to attack cliques (though why not berate those in Notting Hill and Oxford, for a change?) but you are wrong to have tried to damage one of the greatest novels to have been produced this century. "Talent recognises genius — mediocrity sees only itself." Dr Griffiths is not the only "twisted little shit with a grudge against creative writers". Alas.

Yours sincerely,
AMANDA CRAIG,

London NW5.

Vestry of truth

Sir,

It seems that whenever Piloti is at a loss for examples of architectural philistinism to rail against, he returns to his standby stamping-ground: the dear old C of E and its buildings.

We are used to his dislike for women priests and coffee-swilling (Eyes passim). However, he goes too far in his veneration of the plant, so far, in fact, that it would seem he can't possibly understand the first thing about the nature of the Christian faith itself.

The Church may be "guardian of venerable and beautiful buildings" (Eye 753), but the tone of the last paragraph of that article begs the question: What is the "message" according to Piloti? Does he really kneel in awe and veneration of the floorboards and roof trusses come Sunday? Do the "pews, screens and altars and everything that makes churches interesting" really portray the depth of his spiritual understanding?

In the interests of theological, if not architectural inquiry, I think we should be told.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID N HYATT,

Burley, Leeds.

Clap trap

Sir,

If Piloti wants to visit a real "Worship Centre" (Eye 753 & Eyes passim) he should visit the Church of Ascension, Bristol, where we have been exhorted to buy boxes of carpet tiles to cover the perfectly serviceable boards and where we sing our clapping hymns from an overhead projector!

Fortunately, the ceremony of coffee is performed not in the church but in the smelly, cold church hall where groups such as scouts, guides etc., can pay a weekly rental to enjoy the facilities. Other denominations actually support/subsidise their youth groups, but churches in which Tories worship have to "pay their way".

Yours,
SUZANNE HARRIS,

Fishponds, Bristol.

O.B.N.

ASK Eastern Europeans who should have won the Nobel Peace Prize and they will answer Margaret Thatcher.

It is she who is admired, not Gorbachev. Her stance against Communist aggression helped to liberate these people from their yoke.

CELIA GOOCH
Letter in Daily Express

Submitted by Andrew Battarbee.

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

Boiled egg on face

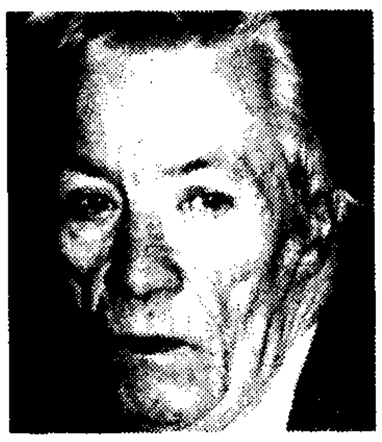
Sir,

Grovel must learn to wake up in the morning if he is to comment on TV breakfast programmes. Andrew Neill's naughty comments on Miss Bordello and Mr D Trelford were made on BBC's Breakfast Time NOT on TV-am. More black coffee for Mr Grovel please, or a new television set!

Respectfully yours,
RONALD TAYLOR,

New Barnet, Herts.

Lookalike



Blunt

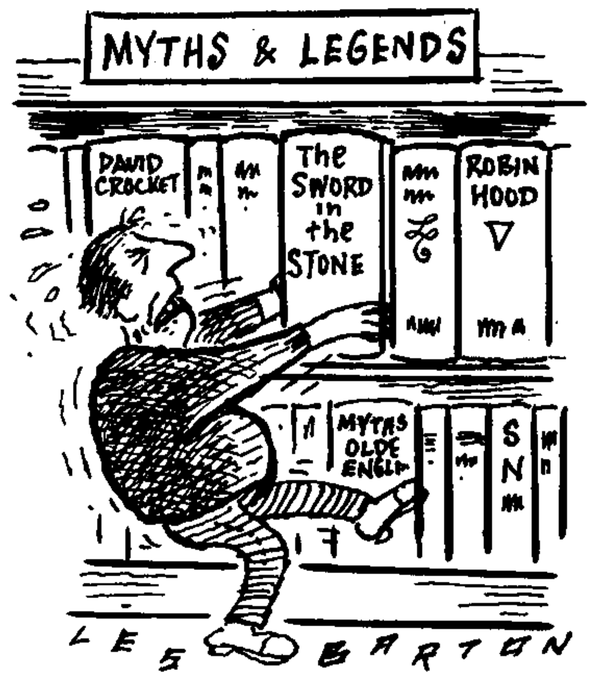
Bernard

Sir,

I wonder if any of your readers have noticed the more than passing resemblance between arch-traitor Anthony Blunt and the celebrated low-life Soho boozer Jeffrey Bernard? Could they possibly be related? I think we should be told.

Yours,
ENA B. PITMAN,

London W1.



Tel tale

Sir,

Mr Chris Robinson, and others, may wish to know that the Lautro rules specifically outlaw the constant and persistent use of unsolicited calls by insurance salesmen. As the MI Group have to abide by these rules, I suggest he makes a complaint to Lautro the next time they pester him.

Lautro's address is: Centre Point, 103 New Oxford Street, London WC1H 1QH. Phone 071 379 0444.

I'm sorry, but I do not have Mr Warburton's phone number. Perhaps some other reader will send it to you for publication, so we can all give him a call.

Yours faithfully,
NICK WEEKS,

Woking, Surrey.

Child hoods

Sir,

I feel some tribute to Dr Rider's work at the Commonwealth Secretariat should be made. I found him most encouraging in my efforts to expose an illegal export of Bangladesh children, whose parents were duped into parting with their children, ostensibly for "schooling" in Dhaka.

The Dutch organisations which took these children sent them abroad for "adoption". But many of the children have disappeared. Also involved was the Bangladesh Social Welfare Directorate, which warned me to stop exposing this racket and then demanded I pay a bribe to them of the equivalent of £500. I reported this to the Bangladesh home secretary. The Bangladesh vice-president told me these racketeers were more powerful than he. I was deported and all assets in Bangladesh seized without compensation. Our 90-bed clinic for destitutes in Dhaka was closed and then turned into a garment factory.

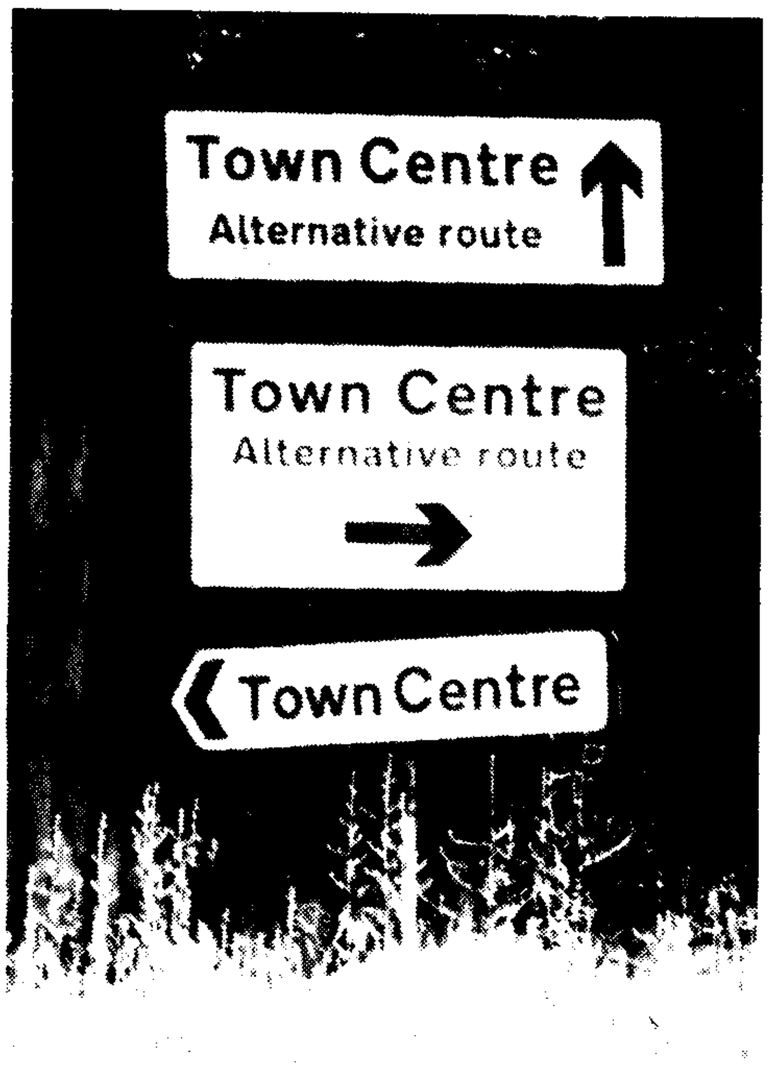
I now have affidavits from some of the aggrieved parents. I have informed the Bangladesh home secretary that if compensation is not paid to the aggrieved parents, if "adoption" records are not opened for investigation and if I am not compensated for seized assets, it is my intention to organise a boycott of Bangladesh garment exports to Europe and the US, in return for what was done to our clinic in Dhaka. If compensation is paid to me it will all be used for destitutes' rehabilitation in Bangladesh.

If the Dutch will not open their "adoption" records I intend to protest outside their offices in Holland. And outside the Bangladesh Embassy in Holland and the Bangladesh High Commission in London. I believe that if Dr Rider were still in the Commonwealth Secretariat he would be able to negotiate a settlement with the Bangladesh Government. With his help, so willingly given in the past, hardship to the Bangladesh garment workers would have been avoided. His past assistance should be put on record. In fairness to Rider, will you oblige — and perhaps by doing so, help to push the Bangladesh and Dutch into investigating and settling this matter?

Yours sincerely,
DR JACK PREGER,

Calcutta.

I-SPY *Farnham*



Submitted by Rob Heyland. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Worm turns

Sir,

Has any of your readers noticed the amazing similarity between events in the Gulf and the novel by Frank Herbert, Dune?

Basically a despotic emperor, called Saddam, attempts to control a rare and valuable commodity through engineering a conflict (I'm talking about the book now).

A deposed but charismatic prince enters the desert to lead the oppressed people to salvation. He goes on to become Master of the Universe (still the book).

Are Muad'Dib and Edward Heath by any chance related, and if so should Mrs Thatcher be told?

Yours faithfully,
JOHN HEAD,

Quinton, Birmingham.

Desert corps

Sir,

With reference to Diplomatic Bags (Letters, 753) from A Falkland Survivor regarding body bags, if the casualties are very large it will be impossible to bring home the bits and pieces. One cannot afford to have a section of the forces transporting corpses home, whilst the remainder are either in action, or if L. of C. transporting arms ammo and water up the line. What happens if the corpse carriers are shot up themselves?

In the last war, the usual procedure was to dig a hole, put the body in it, remove one ID disc, replace the earth and mark it with a rifle driven in and a tin hat hanging on to. In any case, in tropical heat, the dead dry up or liquify.

In the 1914 war, the dead were usually blown out of their graves and were frequently left lying where they fell since it was dangerous to try and collect them.

What is the point in bringing the dead home? A soldier is buried where he falls, and later, with luck, lies in a military cemetery, with others, in honour, and among those of his own regiment or corps.

Yours faithfully
OLD SOLDIER,

Kent.

Shalom Hussein

Sir,

The reverberations from Barry Toshner's ill-advised letter are now getting out of hand.

Torquemada a Jew? Poppycock! Next we will be told that Saddam Hussein's parents run a kosher deli in Stamford Hill.

Let us have no more of this nonsense.

Yours sincerely,
LEWIS COWEN,

Devizes, Wiltshire.

Sweethard

Sir,

Like Grovel I too was dismayed to see that Michal Levin was missing from the first programme when the excellent Hard News returned last month. Imagine, therefore, my unbounded pleasure and unalloyed joy to see her featured not once, but twice in the second programme, giving hell to those tabloid monsters in Fleet Street.

I can well see why her colleagues call her "Black Haired Popular Person", although I must admit to being a bit bemused about the "Well Thought of Ivy" soubriquet. Is Ivy her second name perhaps?

Congratulations are also in order to Clarke Productions for making such a superb series and employing so talented a young journalist. More power to their elbow say I.

Yours faithfully
J. WEBSTER (Mrs),

London N19.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"The music sums up the series better than the series does..."
SIMON BATES, Radio 1
(Tim Hopkins)

"Those days of Stirling Moss seem to be gone for ever, and long may they continue."
WILLIAM WOLLARD, BBC2
(Phillipa Eade)

"Peter Brooke and Gerry Collins issued a communiqué condemning the latest lengths to which the IRA have sunk."
Newsnight, BBC2
(Simon Ward)

"He has always played for Inter Milan, whilst his brother plays just across the city at AC Milan, who of course share the same stadium."
BRIAN MOORE, ITV
(David Crompton)

"The single overwhelming two factors were..."
PADDY ASHDOWN, LBC
(David Ospalla)

Letter from **Nicaragua** *from Our Own Correspondent*

IT IS perhaps the final refutation of the "Marxist" label Ronald Reagan foist upon us, but strapped for cash and pragmatic to the last our Sandinistas are instituting their own programme of *perestroika* and going into business.

The new assault on capitalist markets is, as one might expect, coordinated with military precision. It is led by Commandante Bayardo Arce from a Managua office that previously housed the agitation and propaganda department.

Arce has already assigned portfolios covering specific business areas to several leading revolutionaries. Most have been mandated to start up profitable concerns with specific income targets in the sectors for which they had responsibility as ministers before their election defeat in February. The reality, it seems, is that shorn of its main sources of external finance yet reluctant to slim down its political infrastructure, the Sandinistas are broke.

Top of the list are import-export firms, light manufacturing and the construction sector. A major stake in an airline and a tourism agency to cash in on Nicaragua's scenic attractions as well as sites of special "revolutionary interest" are all in the pipeline. And while some old-timers are having problems with the prospect of marketing everything from Sandinista designer suits to beach-front time-share apartments, most have adopted a distinctly "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em" approach.

"We have to create our own economic empire to compete with the renewed influence that the country's oligarchs are exerting," maintains former tourism minister Hertey Lewites. "I think this is just part of our modernisation process, adaptation to peacetime," claims former vice-president Sergio Ramirez.

The theory is that driven by huge infusions of US aid and the lifting of the trade embargo, business opportunities should soar. The poignancy of the Sandinistas waiting on an economic recovery engineered by their opponents — miserable failures to date with more than 30 devaluations and another massive slump in output to their credit — is lost on no one here.

Indeed, with a current monthly inflation rate of 62 percent regarded as something of a triumph, hard-pressed British entrepreneurs will know what Arce means when he asserts that the Sandinistas will be concentrating on setting up companies abroad until there's more "certainty" at home.

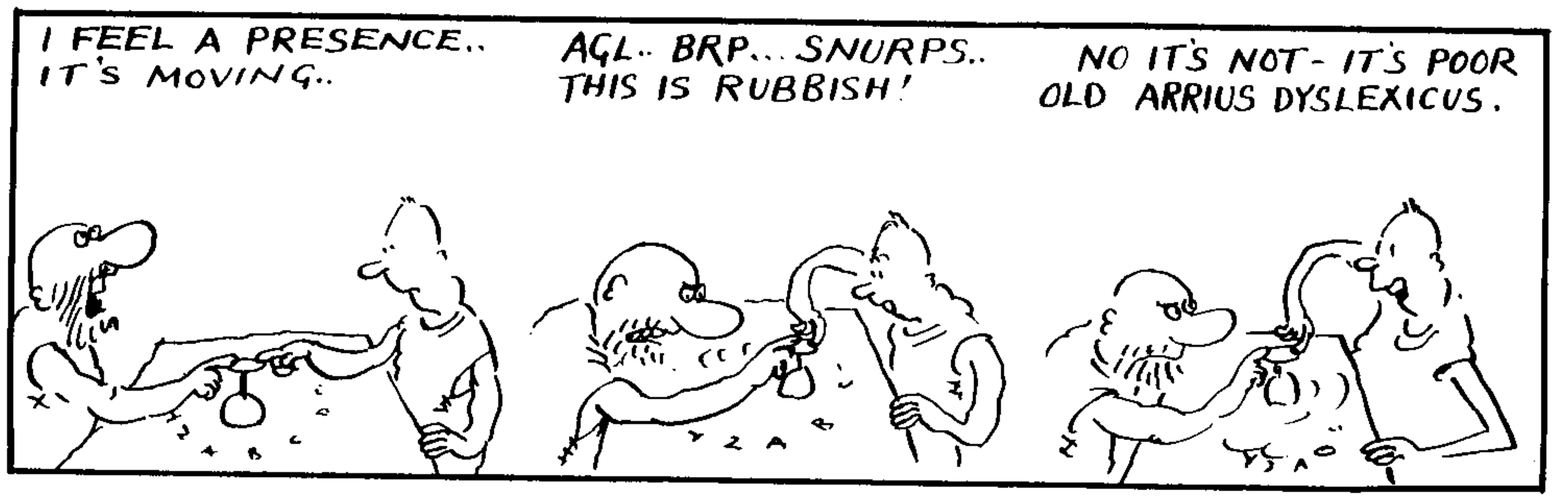
The comrades are also quick to admit that the learning curve is steep. And until they get to know the in and outs of profit margins, foreign currency exchanges and supply and demand, Daniel Ortega plc is likely to be Sandinista Ltd's most vital asset.

A short trip to New York last month confirmed that the personal memoirs and film rights to the life story of the ex-president and revolutionary symbol may be worth almost as much as his erstwhile enemy, Reagan.

"Danny", as he has now been christened by the Madison Avenue marketing men, has already pledged any proceeds from his efforts to the party. "It's a question of wife and 700 mouths to feed," said one official referring to the number of Sandinista workers still on the payroll.

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN



10 Downing Street
Whitehall

Dear Bill,

When we spoke on the phone I promised the dope on the Great Mogadon Showdown once the dust had settled.

I don't think I told you that I was privy to a fairly lengthy pow-wow shortly after Bournemouth at which Tinker Bell told Baker and all the Top Brass that the only solution now was to play the Bash the Frogs card for all it was worth. According to the Boffins there is no way they were going to get the economy right in time for the next election, factories were going to be closing down like nobody's business, and a chill wind would be blowing up the high street. Hence a good simple slogan, best expressed by the intellectuals who run the Sun newspaper and who would be masterminding the copy on condition they were given the use of a spelling book, as "Up Yours Delors!"

The first round was the Euroshindig over Farm Prices, with the Child Gummer sent on a kamikaze mission to defend the British Banger, and told to come out under the TV lights afterwards saying the rest of them were all a lot of four-letter fellows. This was the cue for the Boss to snarl up their Rome Summit where the other Euros were planning a kind of EuroNatWest where all our nest-eggs would float up and down together. (According to Furniss this is quite a good idea.)

However M. went in with guns blazing as to the manner born and said it was ridiculous to talk about all sharing the same bank account when they couldn't even agree on the price of sausages. She then stormed out according to a plan for a so-called impromptu press conference where poor old Hurd blushed with embarrassment and squirmed in his seat while she delivered her Sun Exclusive Editorial.

All this went down like a lead balloon as the Euros paid not a blind bit of notice and went on talking in tongues as if she wasn't there, which she wasn't, as by that time she had stormed back to the UK to rub Pillock's nose in it, delivering a fighting speech in the manner of Boadicea telling the Romans to stuff it up their togas. She was the Mother of Parliaments, she was not selling our sacred institutions down the river, we had not fought in five world wars and defied the might of Hitler only to surrender sovereignty to the faceless bureaucrats from across the water. A few old grog-blossomed parties were then prodded into consciousness by the Whips and raised a ragged cheer, but all the little turds behind her on the TV sat with their arms folded looking as if she'd gone barmy.

Before that could happen, however, Mogadon went on the TV and said that as M's loyal deputy it was his duty to point out that she was totally out to lunch on this one and would probably come round to everyone else's point of view in a few months' time. I happened to be watching this with the Boss and she went totally apeshit and Ingham was told to summon him round for a carpeting. Mogadon duly shuffled in in his brothel-creepers, owlish as ever, and the Boss launched into the standard "How dare you?" tirade with added Gamma Rays – we expected that kind of treacherous behaviour from Heath, but Howe was Second in Command and owed her 100% round-the-clock support. Having witnessed many such scenes in the past (starring Carrington, Pym, Lawson etc), I knew what was coming from the rather smug look on the old boy's face. Eventually, when she paused for breath, he let fly with some very ripe language, picked up, I imagine, from his days at the Bar – though if you ask me his talkative wife Lady Elspeth probably thought up a few of the more salty expletives, she never having seen eye to eye with my better half. The general drift was that M was a hideous, bad-tempered old harridan and he couldn't wait to see the back of her. The Boss however gave as good as she got, saying she was sick and tired of him sulking on the front bench and now she would have a chance to bring in some much-needed new blood. Later in the day the new blood began trickling through the front hall. I bumped into a ghastly toffee-nosed squit called Wargrave, who handed me his coat and even proffered a tip.

Hurd & Co were meanwhile sent out onto the airwaves to pour oil on troubled waters. But you can tell how rattled they are by the fact that they even offered Munster his old job back.

Bad news, as you may have seen, about the Boy Mark. Despite our best efforts to keep him firmly anchored on a golden chain in the Land of the Free, the intolerable little sod has now bought a multi-million pound pied a terre in the Boltons that used to belong to that terrible little man with the beard who built a funfair on Land's End. He sent me the brochure, and it's all gold taps and swimming pools, with nowhere to hang your hat. Whether this betokes a long-term shift of venue for the Boy's scrap-dealing activities I know not, but it all bodes illish in Margaret's present predicament.

If you come to the Cenotaph could you bring that flask in the form of a family bible? The Boss is beginning to twig my walking stick ploy.

Yours at the going down of the Sun,

Denis

The new "Bill" book, *On and On*, is now on sale – £2.95.

CHRISTOPHER LOGUE'S

TRUE STORIES

ILLUMINATED BY BERT KITCHEN

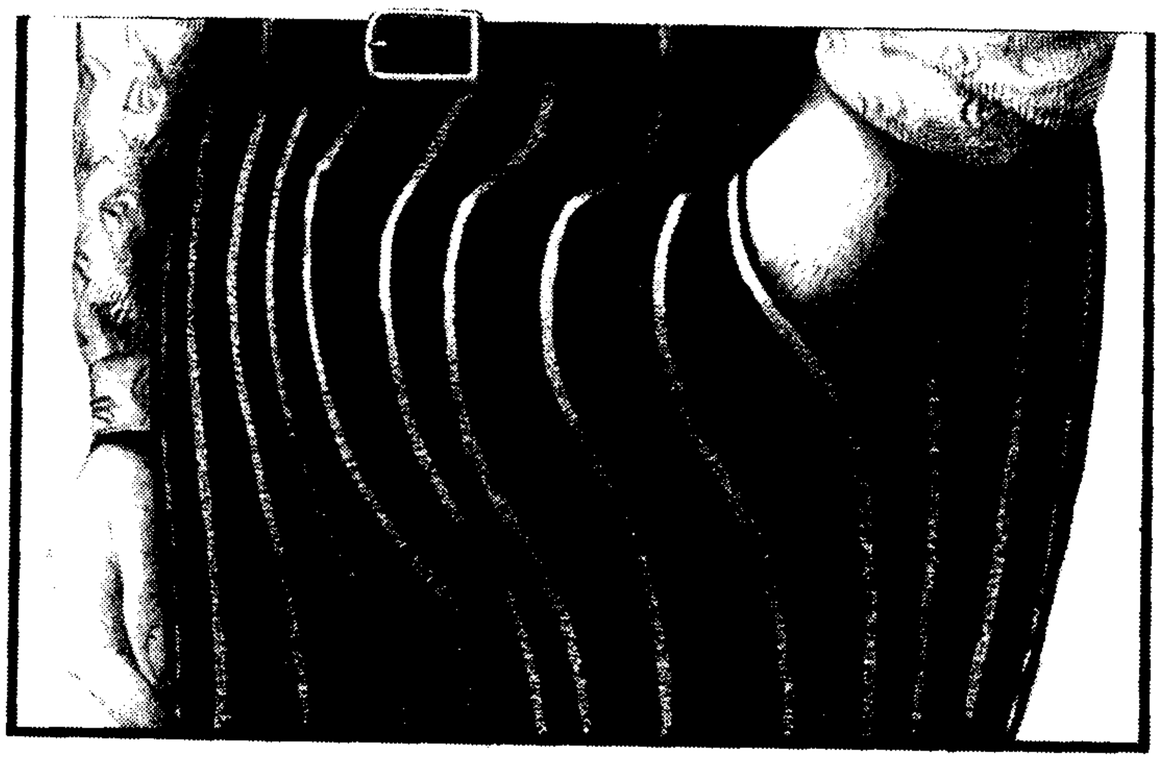
"MY brother Enrique decided to commit suicide because his beloved did not love him," said Miss Maria Quinanola, a student from St Bartolomeo, Peru.

"I thought that I should tell the police and when they arrived they were just in time to cut Enrique down. But by the time they got him to the hospital he had made a recovery and put up such a fight over a scalpel to cut his throat with that the police shot him dead."

FOURTEEN days after his fellow sailor, the Governor of New South Wales, Rear Admiral (Retd) Sir David Martin (57), died of cancer caused by the asbestos commonly found in warships, Rear Admiral David Holthouse, Chief Assistant to the Australian navy's personnel department, said: "Asbestos is not poisonous and may be safely touched or eaten."

IN JUMPING out of the way of a lorry delivering a load of bricks to the building site his firm was insuring, Mr D.J. Duffee of the Southern Providential, Cape Town, was killed when he fell in front of a 27-ton steamroller.

DURING her press conference, Mrs Bappi Azzak, the film and theatrical agent, said: "My client, Sashi, is the most handsome man in the Third World and is fast establishing himself as a tough-guy daredevil adventurer, strong, reliable and determined.



THE TOP award in the All-Philippines Surgical Presentation Contest was given to Dr Raul Andutan. In accordance with the competition's rules, Mr F.C. Bannoday, Dr Andutan's patient, appeared before the judges and made the following statement:

"My firm belief in regular masturbation as a way to a trouble-free love life, and the fact that I have been masturbating for up to 10 times a day for the last 30 years, caused me to fracture my penis — a condition usually associated with bones, but in my case represented by a tear in the penile wall that resulted in a dramatic curve in my erection. This curve caused a clicking sound during masturbation which ruined my ability to concentrate, and a debilitating softness of the organ.

"However, a month after Dr Andutan's operation I was back to my regular performance and my health was fully restored."

"But due to playing the part of Raka, a horribly scarred and malignant dwarf, in the Dubai sci-fi thriller Weera, which involved him walking around on his knees for eight days and kissing the feet of a robot, Sashi has had a nervous breakdown and has returned to his old job as a waiter in the Dubai Crest Hotel."

INTERVIEWED after her son's attempt to play the horn for 32 hours without stopping, Mrs Marion Kite of Sheffield said: "Liam's feat began with an eight-and-a-half-hour stint in a Skegness marquee, but local complaints caused the arrival of a policewoman who, unfortunately, Liam mistook for a strippacop.

"After that we were forced to move into the lavatory of a nearby amusement arcade, myself, the two adjudicators, the official time-keeper, and the man in charge of the three horns. We occupied six cubicles all told. Closing time came and we had to move to the foyer of a cinema. But after 17 hours Liam's lip began to swell and he had to admit defeat."

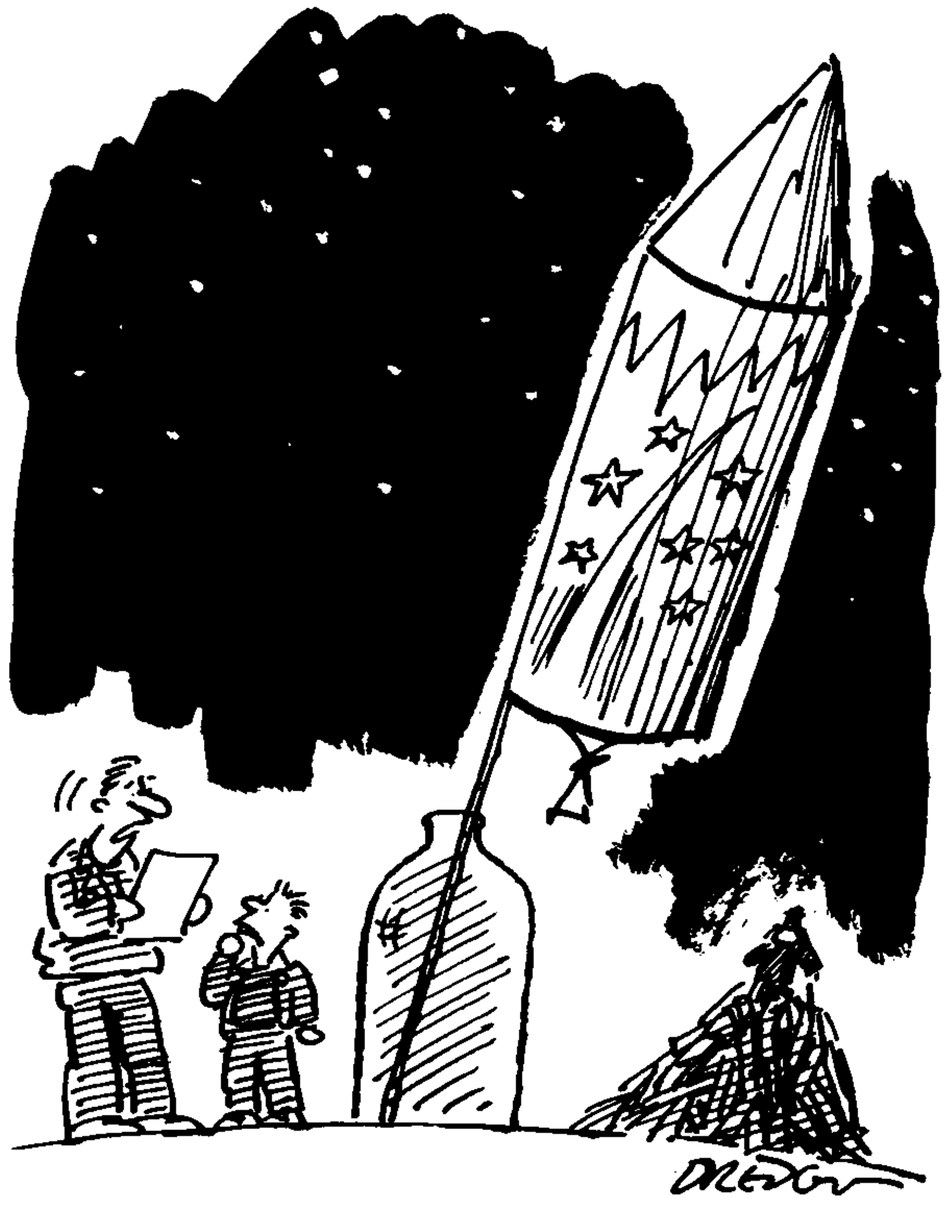
INFORMATION: Rocky Mountain News 14.9.90; Manila Bulletin 18.6.90; Sydney Morning Herald 6.8.90 and 12.8.90; Cape Times 10.8.90; Gulf News 30.8.90; Birmingham Post 29.8.90.

MONITORS: Andrew Clark, Christine Bustin, John Prebble, Martin Wright, Chris Taylor, John Arthur.

TOP TEN BORES

This Week		Last Week	Weeks On List
1	Anthony Burgess	1	3,784
2	David Lynch	–	–
3	Barbara Amiel	7	22
4	Michael Ignatieff	6	37
5	Alastair Cooke	3	789
6	Dr John Rae	–	–
7	Sir Peter Hall	2	322
8	Nigel Kennedy	5	63
9	Clare Short MP	–	24
10	Gary Lineker	4	–

Our thanks to the former staff of *City Limits*, the London listings magazine, for their help in compiling this week's Bores.



"It says 'Only to be used in the event of economic sanctions failure'!"

This week in the Sunday Eye Colour Supplement a new feature (as seen in all the others)

IPFRONTIERS

Great Scott! Selina seems to have netted herself a nice little number! I guess she's just fishing for compliments!

Hat's showbiz! Who's coming dancing with TV's Angela Rippon nowadays? 'Allo 'Allo! It's TV's René, but the couple say it's all totally 'armless!

Sticky moments as Julian Clary meets Sue Lawley! They must be exchanging pearls of wisdom at the launch of his new show!! I thank Sue, as Jules might say!

Guess who! It's Gazza, arriving incognito at Heathrow Airport. But we'd know him anywhere — England ex-specs every man to do his duty-free shopping!

Director Michael has picked a Winner here! It's not so much Seagrove as see everything! Deathwish you were here! Or is he just making another sequin?

Nothing but the best for our Georgie! And Madonna's clearly dotty about him! We'll drink to that, George, but don't get Breathless-ysed on the way home!

(That's enough pisspoor captions to dreary PR photos by clapped-out hacks — Ed.)

GNOMEBY'S

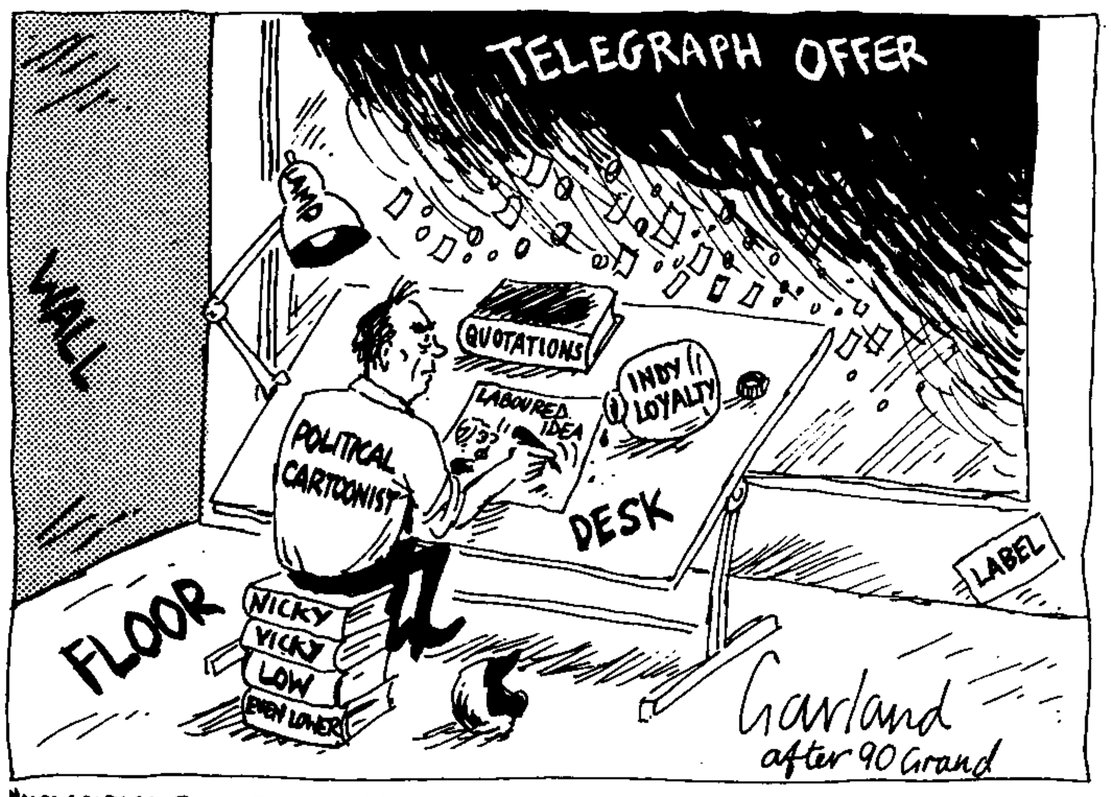
Dealers in Fine Art Since 1990

A Sale Of Very Important Cartoons By Various Hands

Introduction by Prof. Azza Briggs

Few events in the last decade of the 20th century inspired more cartoons than the dramatic decision by Sir Nicholas Garland to leave the *Independent*, the newspaper he had founded and designed, to return to his former position as the World's Most Highly Paid Cartoonist on the *Daily Telegraph*.

Perhaps no cartoonist since Gillray *(contd p. 94)*



"HOW PLEASANT IT IS TO HAVE MONEY, HEIGH-HO! HOW PLEASANT IT IS TO HAVE MONEY" (WITH APOLOGIES TO ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH, BUT NOT TO ANDREAS WHITTAM SMITH)

LOT ONE
(shown above)

—LOT TWO—

"Dropping the Pilot" by Jok. The drawing shows a disconsolate "Kaiser Bill" Whittam-Smith leaning on handrail of the SS Independent while the overjoyed Garland is seen walking down the ladder towards the waiting Telegraph launch.

——LOT THREE——

"If you knows of a better 'ole, go to it" by Gad. The cartoon shows two old soldiers, Cpl "Andy" Whittam-Strobes and Pte Nick "Ideas" Garland, huddled in foxholes in crater-filled landscape while shells full of money explode in background. It is clear from Garland's gleeful expression that he does know of a "better 'ole"!

——LOT FOUR——

"I am going out and I may be some time" by Grud. A small group of dejected-looking and obviously doomed members of the Independent Polar Expedition huddle in a tent. Leaving through the tentflap is a man with a broad smile, Capt Garland, heading for a large limousine with the numberplate MAX 1 standing in the snow outside.

——LOT FIVE——

"Pooh, what a scorcher!" by Scrogg. Pastiche of E.H. Shephard, showing "Pooh" Garland with his paw stuck in a large money jar. Caption: "Isn't it funny how Garland likes money?"

GNOMEBY'S

The Ball of the Century

by **Sir Perishing Worthless** and various other sycophantic right-wing hacks who were there

They were calling it "the party of the century" as last night some of the most distinguished people in the world danced the night away to celebrate the downfall of Communism (except in China, Albania, Vietnam, Burma, etc).

The party, given by convicted drug-smuggler Mr Tacky Takalotofcokeupthenos, took place at the Savoy Hotel.

Everyone agreed it was wonderfully enjoyable and that Tacky was quite brilliant to have thought up such a super wheeze for a party.

Everyone was there, all the people who have been courageously battling for years against the dreadful evil of communism — Mary Kenny, Frank Johnson, Joan Collins, Roger Scruton and Mark Birley, owner of the fashionable anti-Stalinist nightclub, Annabel's.

Another of Tacky's incredibly clever ideas was to call each of the tables we all sat at after some of those dreadful Communists who, thank heavens, have all been thrown into the dustbin of history — for instance, my table was Pol Pot, the one next to us was Deng Xiao Ping and another one was wittily called Max Hastings, in honour of his recent *Daily Telegraph* leader about child benefit that was really jolly rude about Mrs Thatcher.

Taki and Miss Collins at the party

Taki the Rotter

As the evening wore on, and the champagne flowed, one caught sight across the dance floor of such other veterans of the fight for freedom as Sir James Goldsmith dancing with Diana Mosley, Mr Klaus von Barbie dancing with Miss Eva Braun, and the popular Count Tolstoy, who was talking animatedly about Cossacks to Miss Zazza Gabor.

The cabaret was another stroke of genius by mine host. He had flown in from New York the well-known striptease artiste, Miss Titzi Eichmann, the star of the well-known 42nd Street nightclub "Girls Go Naked with Huge Snakes".

The surprise guest of the evening was that other long-standing fighter against Marxism, the Earl of Lucan, who was sadly eaten by one of Mr John Aspinall's gorillas in the closing minutes of an otherwise quite perfect party.

Dr John Casey is 79.

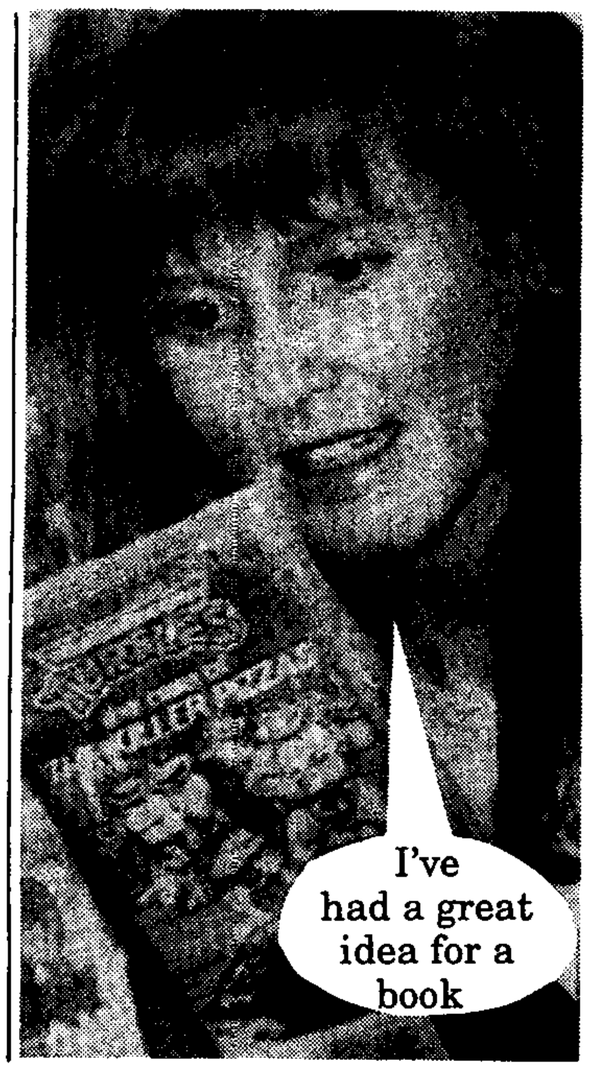
TV CHOICE

The Green Snake
BBC1

New comedy thriller in which an elderly novelist played by Kingsley Amis drinks vast amounts of whisky and begins to see disturbing visions. Huge green snakes invade his local pub and pink elephants return to the bar to haunt him. In desperation he decides to drink a lot more whisky.

CAST

Kingsley Amis . . . . . MALCOLM BRADBURY
Malcolm Bradbury . . . . . DAVID LODGE
The Green Snake . . . . . GRAHAM GREEN
Man in Pub . . . . . JEFF BERNARD LEVIN



Those Howe-Thatcher letters in full

Dear Margaret,

It is with deep regret that I must inform you of my resignation. This unexpected news will no doubt prompt you to ask who I am. I am the one with glasses who sits next to you in the Cabinet — or used to.

I have always been a great admirer of your strong leadership, philosophical vision and ability to sack people who disagree with you.

Your failure to do so in my case has caused me considerable concern, indicating as it does that you have finally lost your grip.

It is for this reason that after sixteen years of careful consideration I have decided to walk out in a bate.

The central issue as I see it is that of Britain's role in Europe or to put it another way my role in the Cabinet. I am in no sense a Euro-Federalist or a Brussels Idealist but I am getting on a bit and I do want to be Prime Minister.

With the political situation so delicate at the moment I am therefore left with no honourable alternative but to stab you in the back and throw the party into chaos.

Elspeth wishes you all the best in your retirement.

Yours,
GEOFFREY
(The one with the glasses)

Dear Man with glasses,

It was with great sadness that I learnt from your letter who you were. After 16 years you accuse me of "losing my grip" and I have to concede that you are absolutely right. I should have sacked you in 1979. However, I must at this point pay tribute to your vital role in agreeing with everything I said for 16 years and thus helping me, albeit in a minor way, with my historic triumphs over the evil forces that threatened Britain — Inflation, High Interest Rates, Unemployment and, of course, the EEC.

We shall all miss you, particularly in your role as Deputy Prime Minister which was so vital a post that I have decided to abolish it.

Goodbye and, of course, Good Riddance.

Yours ever
THATCH
(The Supreme Ruler of the Universe)

Dear Fans,

It is with grave delight that I have witnessed the terrible events in the party that I love.

The Prime Minister has proved that, wonderful as she is in so many ways, she is no longer listening to the voice of the party I love.

That voice is saying only one thing and saying it in a calm, sensible tone with a slight speech defect.

We need a man with a vision. A man with a striped shirt and long flowing hair. A man with a vision of himself inside Number Ten with his feet on the desk.

I am naming no names as that would be disloyal at this difficult time and I have no desire to make matters worse.

That is why I am writing this letter in confidence to my constituency (copies to BBC, ITN, *Times*, *Telegraph*, etc).

I would like to make it clear for the 100th time that I do not want to be leader of the Tory Party. I want to be Prime Minister.

Yours unfaithfully,
MICHAEL HESELTINE.

Dear Judas Heseltine,

You're dead, mate.

NORMO TEBBS

(That's enough letters — Ed.)

DAN DIRE
PILOT OF THE FUTURE?
by HUGH STUN
SUDDENLY IN THE EAST BORON SECTOR, THE DOOMED ESCAPE POD CRASHED INTO THE MAGGON'S BATTLE CRUISER...
THE TOREEN BATTLE CRUISER LURCHED BACK IN A HUGE U-TURN TOWARDS THE FROZEN PLANET OF BENEFIT MINOR...
RED FACE ALERT!
DAMAGE REPORT KENBAKKA?
NONE AT ALL. HARDLY WORTH WORRYING ABOUT. IN FACT I'M DELIGHTED BY THE WHOLE CRASH.
ANYWAY, WE'LL TRASH THEM NEXT TIME.
YOU AND WHO'S SMARMY?
ON THE DOOMED ESCAPE POD, DEAD PARROT I.
YOU SEE WE'RE NOT DOOMED AT ALL. THIS'LL SHOW THE DOUBTING THOMASES!
...AND THE SUES. AND THE GAVINS AND THE TRISTANS. AND THE IMOGENS. AND THE CHRISTOPHERS. AND THE GEOFFREYS. AND THE...
WE'RE NOT A BUNCH OF DREAMERS. WE CAN REALISTICALLY EXPECT TOIBE SUPREME GALACTIC OVERLORDS OF THE ENTIRE COSMOS BY THURSDAY WEEK!
MAGGON, YOUR ENDLESS EVIL IS A TEENSY BIT UNPOPULAR.
WE'VE GOT TO HELP THE NEEDY AND THAT MEANS OURSELVES!
EXTRA MONEY IS VITAL TO BUY THE ESSENTIAL THINGS IN LIFE.
LIKE VOTES.
O.K. REACTIVATE CHILD SUPPORT SYSTEMS.
MEANWHILE, ON ROSE 1...
WE'VE GOT THE CAPABILITY TO DESTROY THE TOREENS FOR GOOD!
SHE'S CALLED THE MAGGON!
WE JUST HAVE TO SIT BACK AND WATCH THEM SELF-DESTRUCT!
OOER... SITTING BACK. THAT'S A TRICKY ONE. I HOPE WE DON'T COCK IT UP.
TWIDDLIN' THUMBS!
BACK IN THE EUROPA QUADRANT...
I'M NOT ISOLATED
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO THINKS THAT!
FORGET DIRE. I'VE GOT MORE IMPORTANT PEOPLE TO FIGHT — MY CABINET.
OH DEAR - I'VE SUDDENLY NOTICED AFTER 12 YEARS THAT THE MAGGON IS QUITE GHASTLY AND WRONG - I RESIGN!
YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY PATHETIC. WHY DON'T YOU RUN FOR LEADER?

POETRY CORNER

In Memoriam Xavier Cugat, Bandleader

So. Farewell
Then

Xavier Cugat,

King of Latin
American dance
Music.

Aye aye aye
Aye.

Cha cha
Cha.

Arrrrrimba.

Yes, those were
Your catchphrases.

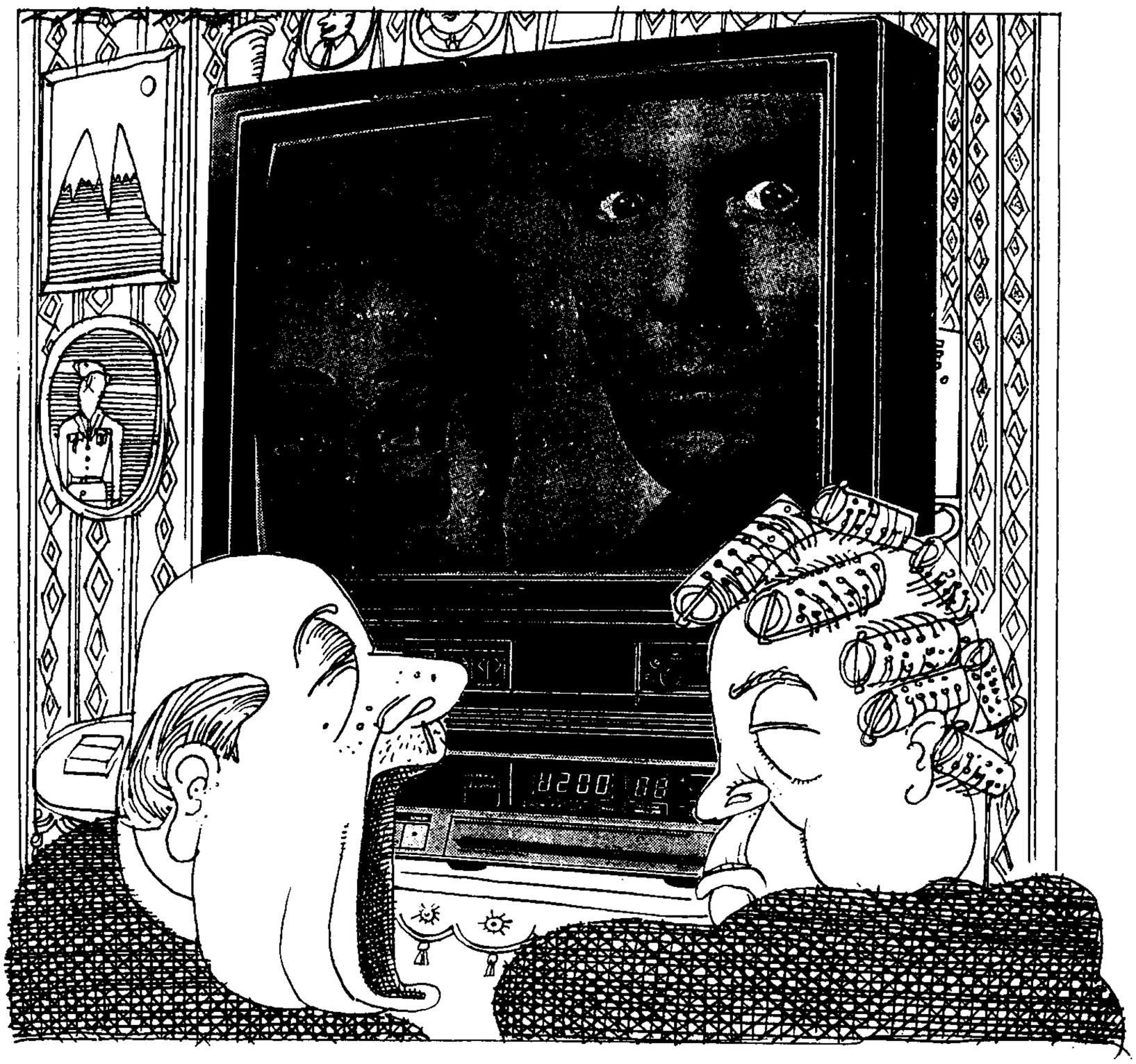
Somehow, on the
Page they
Do not capture

The magic
Of the
Rumba.

E.J. Thribb (17½)

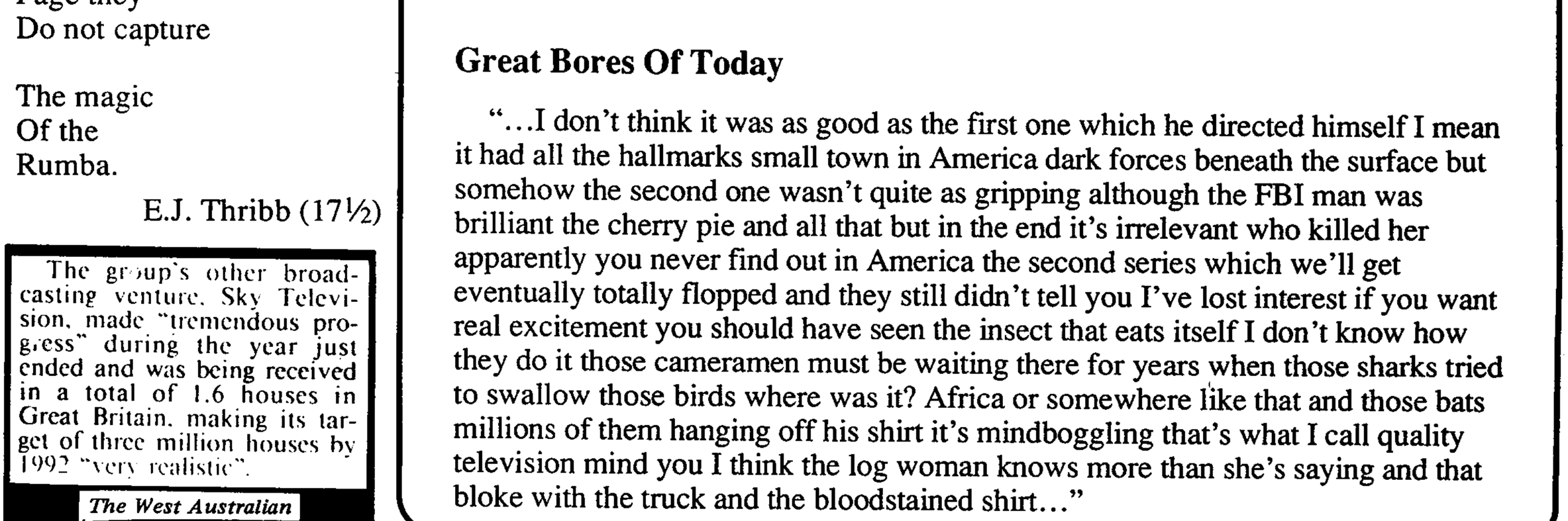
The group's other broadcasting venture, Sky Television, made "tremendous progress" during the year just ended and was being received in a total of 1.6 houses in Great Britain, making its target of three million houses by 1992 "very realistic".

The West Australian



Great Bores Of Today

"...I don't think it was as good as the first one which he directed himself I mean it had all the hallmarks small town in America dark forces beneath the surface but somehow the second one wasn't quite as gripping although the FBI man was brilliant the cherry pie and all that but in the end it's irrelevant who killed her apparently you never find out in America the second series which we'll get eventually totally flopped and they still didn't tell you I've lost interest if you want real excitement you should have seen the insect that eats itself I don't know how they do it those cameramen must be waiting there for years when those sharks tried to swallow those birds where was it? Africa or somewhere like that and those bats millions of them hanging off his shirt it's mindboggling that's what I call quality television mind you I think the log woman knows more than she's saying and that bloke with the truck and the bloodstained shirt..."


I'VE HEARD THE PIECE OF MUSIC WHICH IS ALLEGED TO HAVE LED TO THE DEATH OF A YOUNG MAN...
AND I HAVE TO SAY THAT I WAS SHOCKED BY THE LYRICAL CONTENT AND SENTIMENTS EXPRESSED.
MERE WORDS CAN HARDLY DESCRIBE MY FEELINGS ABOUT THIS SONG. IT'S... WELL, IT'S... WELL, WICKED.
WELL WICKED EH? NICE ONE. THINGS ARE LOOKING UP AT LAST.

Private Eye's Historic Cut-Out-'n'-Keep Guide to those "Gate" crises

Watergate, Irangate, Muldergate — they were only the first in a long line of famous "gates" that in the past 20 years have rocked every government in the world to its foundations. Here are the up and coming "gates" that should be major talking points in the months to come.

DUBLINGATE

Did Seamus O'Bubblegum (above), Deputy Leader of the Fianna Failia Party, ring The Teacosaigh of the Doylaigh Eamonn O'Flhannelpants on 17 September 1973 to ask whether he would second a crucial amendment to the controversial Peat Smoking Bill? The row now threatens the survival of the Fine Ael Coalition government led by Brengun O'Hooghee.

LOCKERBIEGATE

Was the mystery passenger 177 on PanAm flight 103 in fact the CIA Bureau Chief in West Beirut or was he a Syrian-born double agent duped by Abu Nidal into carrying a cassette recorder which he believed to be a Mossad plant as part of a carefully planned Libyan-inspired plot to destabilise the American-backed Christian Maronite Militia in their bid to topple the breakaway splinter faction led by General Aoun Gaulle.

IRONGATE

Did Mrs Thatcher on 23 Sept 1989 give a secret order to the Ministry of Works to erect a huge pair of iron gates at the end of Downing Street in order to keep Mr Denis Thatcher in at night?

GARDENGATE

Did Mrs Thatcher send a secret memorandum to Horace Foultrouser MP, Chairman of the influential backbench Canine Committee on 23 November 1990, instructing him to fly back from a high-level factfinding lunch in Venezuela in order to vote down the amendment to the controversial Dog Leads (Amendment) Order which threatened to bring down the Thatcher government?

MARGATE (1957)

Trouble starts when Barbara Windsor and bus driver Leslie Phillips go paddling at the famous East Kent seaside resort. Watch for convincing cameo by David Frost as the deckchair attendant (black-and-white, 97 mins).

To The Editor of the *Daily Telegraph*, *Spectator*, *Times* etc.

From Sir Herbert Guzzett

Those Cozzacks

SIR–May I be allowed, briefly, to reply to the reply by Count Tallstory to the allegations made by Brig. Dalrymple in his article *The Errors and Omissions of Ludovic Kennedy in his Television Interview with the Late Lord Stockton, shown on BBC South on 23 January 1972*?

It is simply not true, as Count Tallstory says, that on 22 May 1945 Gen. Hartebeeste, the Commander of D Force, sent a specific order to the 23rd Infantry Brigade, making it clear that his signal AFQ/WX/102 had been rescinded.

Those of us who were out in wherever it was at the time know that the soldiers of the British Army performed a very gallant task in very difficult circumstances.

Perhaps this will settle the argument about this very tragic episode once and for all.

BRIG. SIR HUZZA GUZZA
Dunlibellin
Brimelow, General Staffs.

A SUN WIT 'N' WISDOM SPECIAL!

THE TOP TEN PRINCE CHARLES JOKES

● **ONCE a journalist asked the Prince: "How are you feeling, Sir?" Charles wittily riposted: "Bloody awful!"**

● **ON another occasion the Prince was asked by a photographer: "How are you feeling, Sir?" "What a bloody silly question!" he wittily responded.**

● **THERE was another time when the Prince had a chance to display his famous sense of humour. A schoolboy asked him: "How are you feeling, Sir?" "Why aren't you at school, you little twerp?" Charles wittily snarled.**

● **PERHAPS the most famous occasion came when an old lady expressed the wish: "I hope you're feeling better, Sire." Quick as a flash, Prince Charles replied: "Get stuffed, you old bat!"**

TOMORROW: The Duke of Edinburgh: is he the new Oscar Wilde?

Yes, It's RSC Rhyming Slang!

RSC	**Nothing to see**
Barbican	**Down the pan**
About to fold	**Moscow gold**
Sir Peter Hall	**No use at all**
Pericles	**More cash please**
Future uncertain	**Final curtain**
David Mellor	**Very bad fella**
Warm beer	**King Lear**
Glass of sherry	**Hands, Terry**
Alan Howard	**Should try Noel Coward**
Pit	**Not very good**
Trevor Nunn	**Loads of mon**
Anthony Sher	**That's it, er...**

HEIR OF SORROWS

BY

SYLVIE KRIN

THE STORY SO FAR: Charles has been encouraged to take the healing waters of St Ivel's Well in Glastonbury.

Now read on...

THE Cooper Leybrand sped effortlessly through the narrow lanes of Lymeswold, past the hedgerows already turning to a rich autumnal gold, spattered here and there with blood-red winter burberries — food for the hungry maudlings in the long winter months.

Charles felt a strange sensation at being out and about again, especially in the company of the bearded New Age author Jolyon Leyline, whose magazine *Corn Circles and CornCirlemen* had won an admiring audience all over the world.

This man, a friend of Sir Laurens van der Post, was to be Charles's guide for their visit to the Sacred Well of St Ivel.

"On our right, Sir," said Jolyon, fingering the golden mandela around his neck, "you can see the Standing Stone of Wogan, which is believed to be where King Arthur met Merlin before the Battle of Barkworth when he slew the Green Man of Amis."

Charles craned his neck towards what at first sight appeared to be little more than an empty field with a large rock in the middle. "How fascinating."

Excitedly, Jolyon fished in a pocket of his kaftan and withdrew a large volume entitled *The Myth of Avalon*.

"I have shown here, Sir, how a straight line drawn between this rock and Stonehenge passes directly through three energy centres which, when added to the number of tors between Monckton and Lewchester, makes the magic figure of 27."

He smiled pensively and stroked his greying beard with his delicate tapering fingers, the smallest of which bore a silver gerbil ring with emerald and ruby eyes.

"Can't you feel the energy, Sire?" he enquired. "We're entering the ancient kingdom of Camembert, the centre of healing in pre-medieval times."

Charles became more excited and was growing in confidence that at last a cure for his injured arm was in sight. As Sir Laurens, his old friend and mentor, had said to him *only* the day before, when they were dining at the home of Sir James Savile, the noted philanthropist and himself a connoisseur of the laying on of hands: "When the tide comes in, it must go out again."

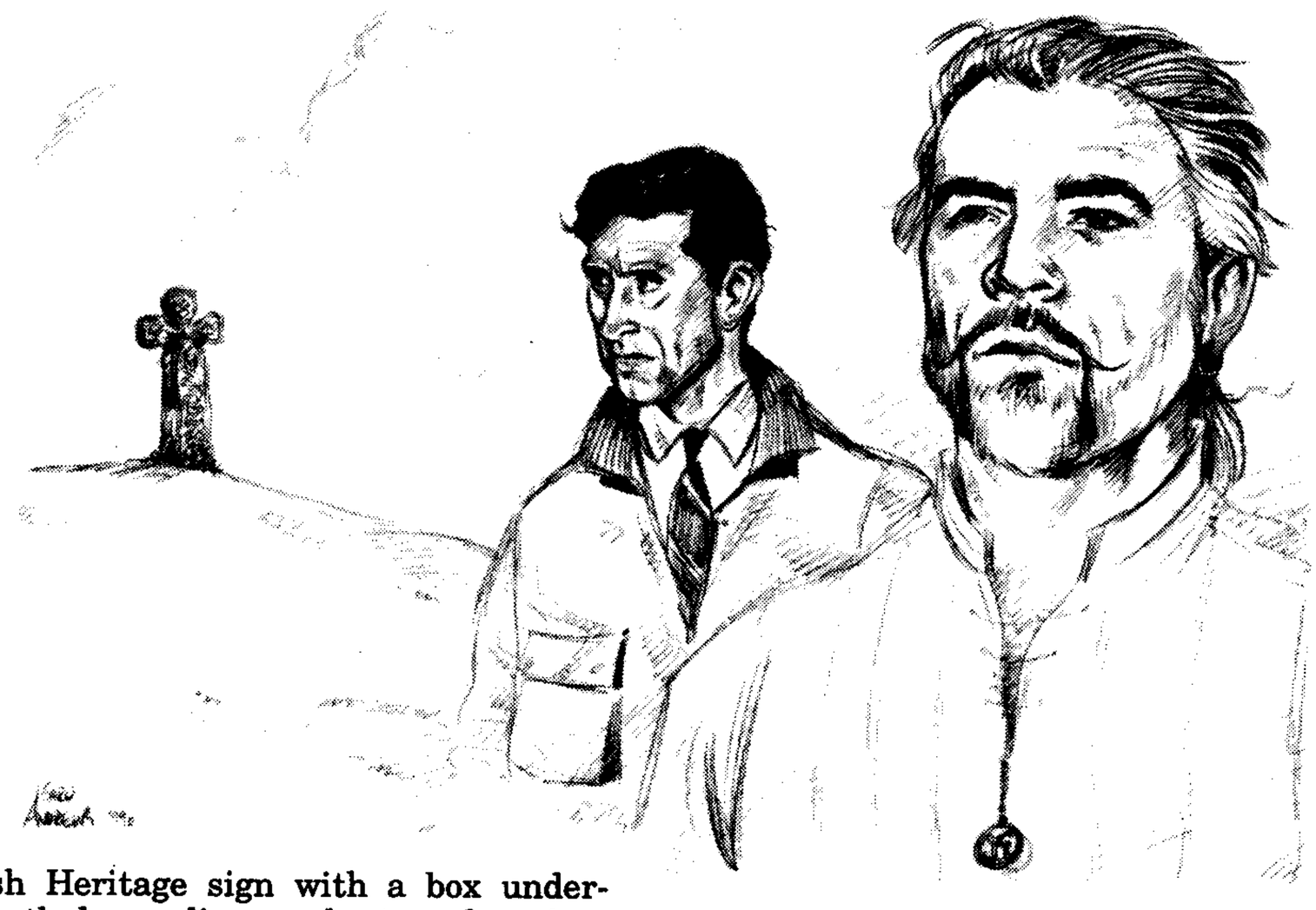
How very true that was, how very, very true, even though the cigar-smoking Sir James had not appeared to grasp the full meaning at the time: Charles was sure there was one somewhere...

"You should see it at any minute now," exclaimed the genial mystic excitedly. "The Great Tor of Chuckbury."

Sure enough, as the car mounted an incline in the road, there loomed before them the magnificent emerald mound, crowned by a Celtic cross marking the site of the spring...

"THE cross marks the site of the spring, Sire," explained the be-sandalled Jolyon as they joined a small band of pilgrims making their way slowly towards the summit. Charles noticed in particular a young American couple dressed in brightly coloured robes with a baby in a sling strapped to the man. They looked rather like those Eskimos that Sir Laurens had written about in his book *Travels in the Boffin Islands*.

The woman turned to Charles and pointed to what looked like a gorse bush by the side of the path next to an English Heritage sign with a box underneath demanding a voluntary donation.



"Say, did you folks know that this bush was planted by no less a personage than His Holiness St Pancras of Arimathea when he visited these shores in 59 BC?"

Her companion nodded and added: "Pontius Pilate undertook a pilgrimage here to atone for his sins in his third incarnation. His stave was turned into a weeping willow, which you can see yonder behind the chemical toilet area."

What fascinating people these were, thought Charles. They seemed so in tune, so at peace with themselves, in the harmony of... er... thingie...

He felt more certain than ever that the well would finally offer him deliverance from his travails.

Now they were beside it and the huge Vale of Maida stretched beneath them like a golden carpet.

But what was this? An improvised blackboard notice announced: "English Heritage regret that, owing to the drought, a Holy Spring Ban has been imposed until further notice. Fine for drinking unlawfully: £400."

Charles could scarcely conceal his disappointment.

"No water after we've come all this way? It really is... appalling..."

He sat down wearily on the well's perimeter and rubbed his arm. He turned to Jolyon: "I was absolutely counting on this."

"Excuse me, friend." The American interrupted their conversation. "Do I understand that you are in quest of healing substances to cast out the demons of pain?"

"Well... yes... in a sort of nutshell thingie... that's it. Yes."

"Aha!" beamed the transatlantic visitor. "Then allow me to present you with an old herbal remedy used by the Showaddywaddy Indians of Lake Wobegon centuries before this well was even heard of."

Charles brightened as his new friend pulled out a small tin, from which he produced a crudely hand-rolled cigarette...

IT WAS amazing, thought Charles as he lay on his back looking up at the stars. There was that spaceship again and there were the little green men smiling at him and singing one of those songs of which Diana was so fond. "Lady in Red, Dancing in the Sky with Diamonds" — wasn't that it?

"Come on, Sir. It's getting dark." Jolyon was tugging at his elbow, but Charles felt no pain. He wanted to stay here for ever. It was an amazing place. And there, in the distance, he could see the Pyramids. It was true about the lines after all...

(To be continued)

EAT UP YOUR GREENS!

BBC/ITV/Channel 4.
All nights. 8.30pm.

Yes, they're back! The ever popular Green family in another series of eco-madness!!

(Silly music. Shot of Green family cycling around Solihull. Cut to close-up of rubber duck in bath. Camera pulls back to reveal Mr Green surrounded by electric wires and cables and looking confused)

MR GREEN: Oh duck!

(Billy pops head round bathroom door)

BILLY: Tut, tut, our Dad! I know you swear by wave-power but...

MR GREEN *(splashes water at Billy)*: Why you...!?

BILLY: How's it going, our Dad?

(Mr Green energetically paddles bathwater with cricket bat, making waves)

MR GREEN: You see, our Billy, the waves convert bath energy into electricity which is passed through these wires and stored in that car battery over there by the toilet.

BILLY: It's a sort of *chain* reaction, is it?

MR GREEN *(groans)*: You're worse than Tony Blackburn, you are...

MRS GREEN *(enters carrying tray)*: Here we are, our Dad, it's a nice cup of Wheat-Free Yoghurt-Flavoured Tea Drink for all your hard work in the bathroom. *(Puts down tray)* I'd prefer it were in the bedroom, mind you.

MR GREEN: Now then, our Mum, not in front of our Billy. I'm trying to teach him about making waves.

MR GREEN: I don't suppose you've much to teach him, Romeo. *(Hands Billy slice or organic meat-free sausage cake)*

BILLY *(sings)*: Romeo-ver, in the clover!

MRS GREEN: Chance would be a fine thing!

(Enter Debbie)

DEBBIE: Mum, please. Our Dad's only trying to conserve the planet's vital resources, substituting the harmful fossil fuels and potentially lethal nuclear power with natural wave energy.

MR GREEN: Thank you, our Debbie. By the way, isn't this your Knit-A-Balaclava-For-An-Animal-Liberation-Terrorist afternoon?

DEBBIE: It was, our Dad. But do you know what they gave us to knit with?

BILLY: Needles, I expect!

MRS GREEN: Don't needle her, love.

BILLY: You won't pin this on me!

MR GREEN: Shush, and let our Debbie finish.

DEBBIE *(sobs)*: They gave us *WOOL*!! Dead animal fibre, DAF for short! Woollen wool!! Can you believe it?!

BILLY: You can't pull the wool over our Debbie's eyes...

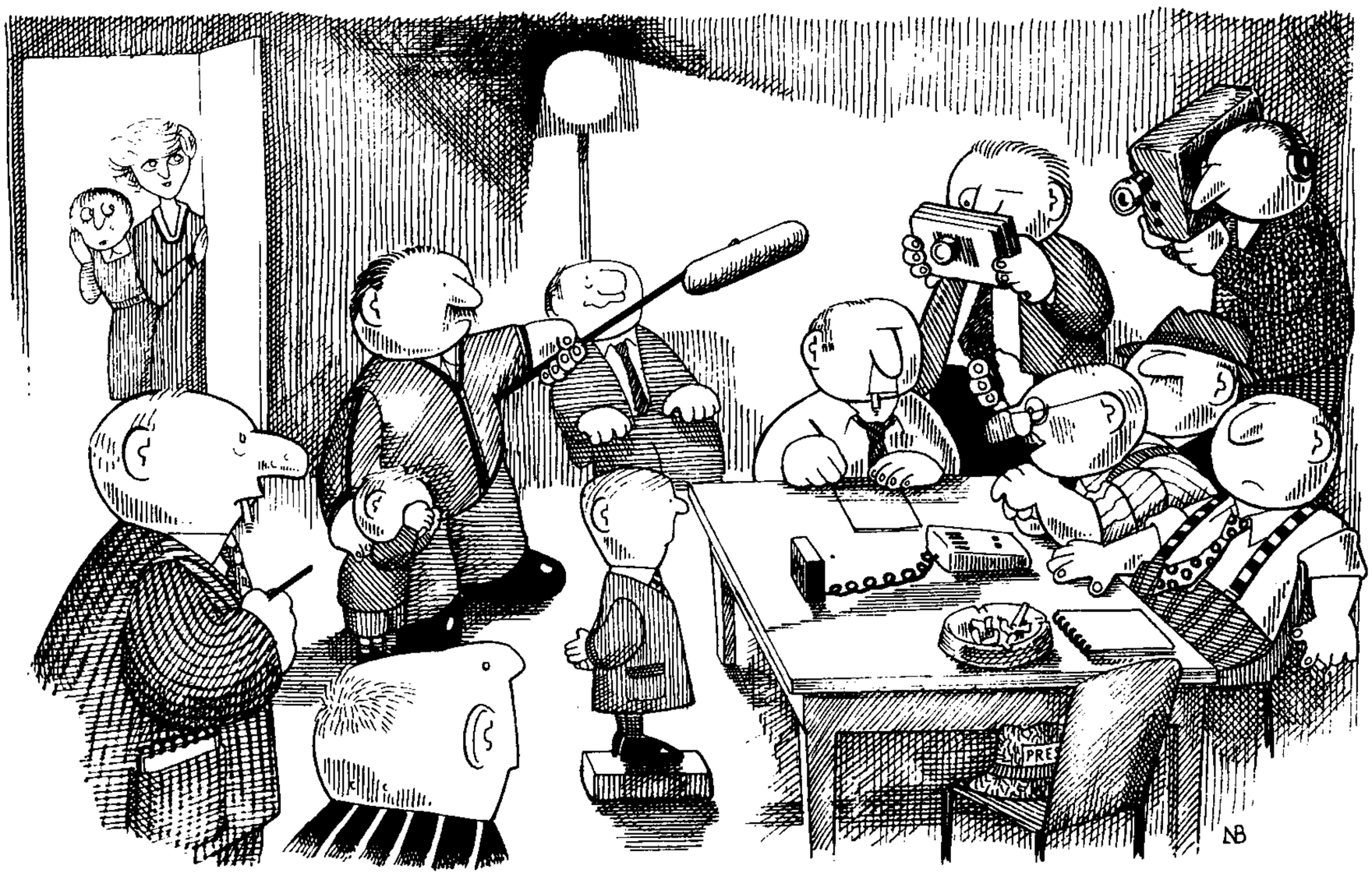
MR GREEN: You were right to come home, lass. Now, let's see if this wave power really *does* work.

MRS GREEN: Aye, but before we do let us bow our heads in meditation to the great water spirits that flow through the earth's rivers, unleashing their natural bounty on flora and fauna alike.

(All bow heads for moment)

MR GREEN: Right, Billy, you're nearest the light. When I say go, switch it on.

THE OLD MASTERS NO. 94



"And when did you last see your father, Your Highness?"

"Penny for the Guy, Mr Fawkes"

DEBBIE: Are you sure it's safe, Dad?

MR GREEN: Safe as houses. Go!

(Huge bolt of electricity leaps from bath to Mr Green's hair, which stands on end. Room fills with black smoke. Close-up of charred rubber duck in empty bath)

BILLY: Goodbye, Dad! Don't forget to *wave*!

(Cut to interior of ambulance. Mr Green is on life-support machine)

DEBBIE *(to ambulance driver)*: I hope you're using unleaded petrol. The planet's dying as well as our Dad, you know.

MRS GREEN: You'll be all right dear.

MR GREEN: What do you mean?! I've just been electrocuted!

CAMP PARAMEDIC *(emerging with saline drip)*: Are you AC or DC, ducks?

MR GREEN: I've had enough ducks.

MRS GREEN: I wish I had...

(Shot of ambulance speeding through Solihull past young men in balaclavas with baseball bats beating up passers-by for wearing leather shoes)

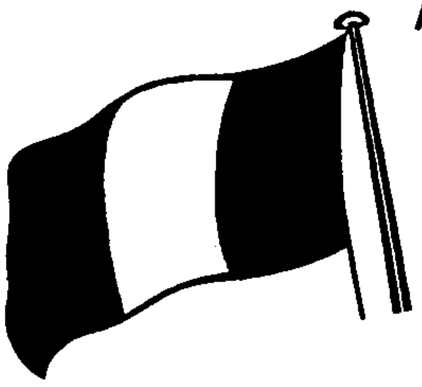
DEBBIE *(out of ambulance window)*: Those bats better not be made out of rainforest hardwood, Steve, or you'll be hearing from me!!

BILLY: Cheer up, our Dad. Your electricity experiment was so unsuccessful the Government'll be privatising you next!

[NOTE: This line was cut from the eventual transmission for reasons of political balance. It was replaced by Mr Green saying: "I'll be buying some of those shares as soon as I'm better."]

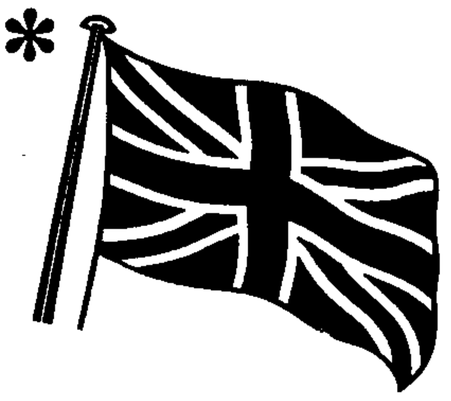
ANNOUNCER: And before the second repeat of *Twin Peaks*, just a moment to tell you that the Greens will be back next week. The fun starts when Debbie and Steve put razor blades into the supermarket's pot noodles. And no one notices...

Lines Written To Celebrate The Historic Completion Of The Channel Tunnel*



by Sir William Rees-McGonagall

**(or at the least the 2" borehole linking the French and British service ducts)*



'Twas in the year nineteen-hundred nine and zero
That Mr Alistair Morton became the nation's hero.
For he was the Chairman of Eurotunnel plc
That dug a mighty hole all the way under the sea.

For millions of years the island of Albion had stood alone
Reachable only by Sealink and Vodaphone.
Cut off from Europe by a strait of twenty two miles.
No wonder Shakespeare had called it one of the most
sceptred of isles.

Proudly the islanders looked out from the White Cliffs of
Dover
Telling the Europeans that they could not come over.
Many were the invaders who sailed in vain —
Napoleon, Caesar, Saxon and Dane.

And we must not forget the Spanish Armada,
If there had been no Channel, Drake's job would have
been harder.
And let us not forget either the designs of Hitler
Who would have goosestepped up Whitehall if the
Channel had been littler.

But eventually a new age dawned, an era of peace,
When businessmen needed to travel from Glasgow to
Greece.
So President Mitterrand got together with Mrs Thatch,
And a great plan for a tunnel they began to hatch.

Canterbury Cathedral was the historic venue.
And now we can tell you what was on the menu.
Frogs Legs and Brown Windsor Soup were the choice
of starters,
Or, for those who didn't like either of these things, the
juice of tomatoes.

The main course followed — Roast Lamb from Wales,
And from the French, of course, six escargots, also
known as snails.
A variety of sweets was served from the trolley —
Profiteroles or Christmas Pudding with holly.

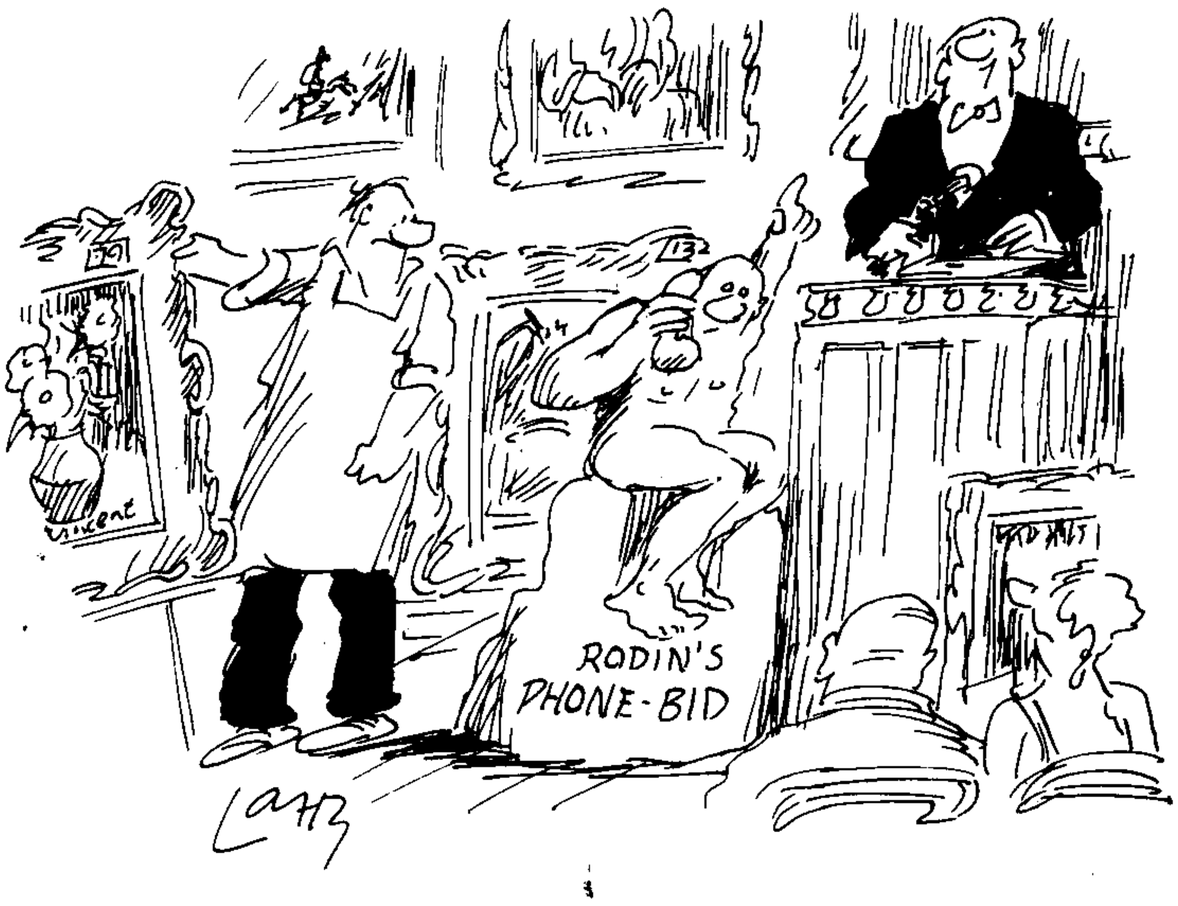
After lunch they signed the historic accord
Perhaps because of all the brandy and liqueurs they
had taken on board.
And from that day forth the huge machines began to
bore,
Making a gigantic hole beneath the ocean floor.

But things did not turn out to be altogether sunny
As Mr Morton's consortium kept on running out of
money.
Cap in hand, he would return to his backers,
Who began to realise the whole idea was crackers.

But there was no stopping the redoubtable Mr Morton
As with Churchillian courage he gallantly fought on.
And at last in October came the moment long awaited
As the people of Europe watched with breath a-bated.

Finally the Continent and Britain were joined.
"Well Done Maggie," was the phrase the Daily Mail
coined.
It seemed that the tunnellers had achieved their goal,
But in fact they had only made a very small hole.

No sooner had the champagne corks ceased to pop
Than the penny with the public began to drop.
They realised that the project was far from done.
The digging of the tunnel itself hadn't yet begun.



Long-running TV character to be axed

by Our Media Staff
Jane Thynne-Stuff

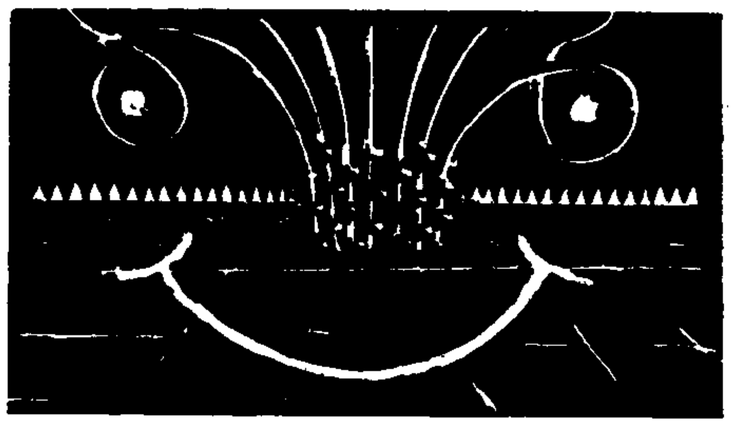
A once highly-successful and long-running TV advertising campaign, featuring a bossy Finchley housewife, is to be dropped after 11 years.

The character, MT, based on the initials of the product "Margaret Thatcher", has been steadily losing appeal, and advertising executives now feel that the ghastly, strident woman in glasses with the deadbeat husband and the useless son no longer strikes a chord with a mass-audience.

As yet there are no plans for a replacement, but insiders are convinced that a new series may soon be seen on our screens, centred around a garrulous Welsh windbag called NK, with a strident wife and a fat friend called Roy who keeps falling flat on his face.

Maureen Lipperson is 44.

DIARY



GERMAINE GREER

My God, I despair of women sometimes. My whole life and my every breath has been informed with the imprint of my love and respect, admiration indeed, of women. But for Christ's sake, they sometimes let me down. If there is one type of woman I hate it is the very thin type of woman. And if there is another type of woman who gets up my nose it's the fatty. And what about those detestable in-betweenies, those spineless wretches who don't have the guts to be one thing or the other? They frankly get on my wick. Not until woman can truly be herself — neither fat nor thin nor in-between - can our sisterhood hope to save this doomed planet.

Sometimes I think I care too much. I can't help feeling passionately about the future of this planet and all the heads on it, and I constantly strive to take a forward-thinking and progressive view — okay, revolutionary — to the fuzz and the establishment and how they get their rocks off.

Over the years, my radical intellectual approach to the issues of the day has done as much as anyone to make this world a better place. Witness my articles "There's a Dick in my Toaster and The Pigs Don't give a Fuck" (*Oz*, Sept '69). "Vaginal Deodorants Are Murdering the Ozone Layer" (*Independent* Magazine, July '89) and "Hands Off My Arse, Fat Boy (A Prayer for Bangladesh)" (*Screw* Magazine, June '73). The pieces I wrote at that time still make great reading because unlike some others I can think of I can write much better than them punchy sentences that get my point over without using too much of sensation-seeking words like fuck or cock, for God's sake.

Let's address ourselves to some real live issues, just this once, for God's sake. Jimi Hendrix may not have wanted us to grieve for him but we had better grieve for ourselves. We have lost the best rock guitarist we ever had because we did not know how to keep him. If Jimi is going to live tomorrow we have to make up our minds to live today. He was playing real good for free and he was happy but we let him slip down the energy drain. Can we build fast enough to close it before we disappear ourselves? Can we sweep up the pieces of yesterday's life?

I live from the earth, and with my spade I give back to the earth that which is rightfully the earth's: earth for instance.

I love chickens, and I keep chickens not just to strangle them but to provide food and to EDUCATE, for God's sake. I find it shameful that so few chickens know the first thing about what they're doing on this planet so at 9.30 every morning I assemble them in a classroom and sweat my guts out trying to stamp out their ignorance. You know, half of them couldn't even tell you the name of the Almighty, and the other half would fuck up on the spelling, making it "Germane" without the "i".

Forthcoming opinions: "Stinging Nettles Make Perfect Table-Settings", "Charity Sucks", "Let's Get Outta Vietnam Now", "MacGovern's The Man".

There's not much on earth that I hate more than I hate what I hate about chickens which is why I hate chickens more than I hate what I hate about the rest of the earth. By shameless use of contacts and endless plugging of their ridiculous clucking, by their ostentatious eggs (haven't they even heard of the word ABORTION for God's sake?) and their feathers and their look-at-me-I'm-so-fucking-humble expressions, they have managed to convince normally sane people that they are not the unabashed imperialist poultry-supremacists who would happily kill us if they had the Bomb which thank God they don't.

When you are the centre of attention, it is easy to act humble. The stereotype chicken imposed by poultry society — not much up top, good to eat with gravy, etcetera — is far removed from the squalid reality of sharp beaks, sweat-sodden bodies and vicious, blood-stained claws. All this must change. Now. So this term I've given each of them a copy of my last book, *Sex and Destiny*, to inwardly digest before returning it to the earth. Only when we have a 100% literate chicken population can we really feel free as humans.

In my house we operate a strict Green policy. We recycle everything we can. I recycle books, opinions, articles and even diary items, some of which I originally employed as far back as the mid-Sixties. Of course, natural resources are growing less as each day passes, and there is now a very real possibility that by, say, the year 2000, all my views, pseudo-historical surveys and dogmas will have run dry. To avoid this possibility, I have taken to using marvellous thought-substitutes. I find, for instance, that self-righteous scorn is a perfectly acceptable alternative to serious criticism, and that a barked insult can easily be passed off as wit. Another method is to turn over all the thoughts you had ten years ago and to use them again the other way up. No one will notice, for God's sake. But if, like me, you are growing a crop of lovely fresh banalities, do be sure to keep them well-fed with good fresh dollops of manure and household gubbins. I have a gorgeous crop of opinion-pieces sprouting shortly — among them "Fellatio Causes Cancer", "Let's Stop This 'Being Nice' Bullshit" and "The Only Answer: A Condom for the Ozone Layer" — and I am delighted to say that they will be grown entirely from regurgitated waste.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Mr Peter Carter-Fuck and Partners, Libel Lawyers to the Rich and Famous

Dear Sir,

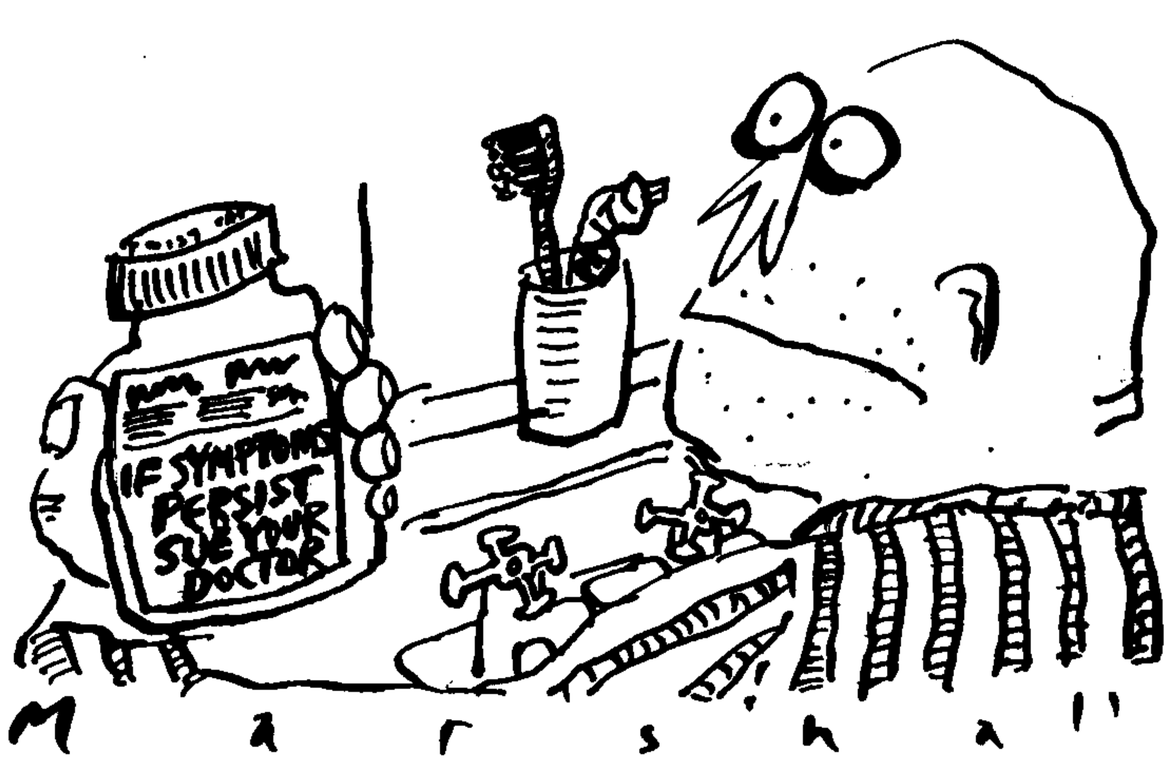
We represent our client, the late Mr Sheep, who has become increasingly distressed by the repeated libellous comparison of himself to a Sir Geoffrey Howe.

This has caused my client great embarrassment and has, beyond doubt, brought the reputation of the late Mr Sheep as a leading ex-member of the Grazing Community into grave disrepute.

Mr Sheep resents the gross calumny that he in any way resembles Sir Geoffrey Howe, nor, he points out, would he put up with the humiliating and degrading treatment that the aforementioned Sir Geoffrey has endured at the hands of the Prime Minister for so long.

We thereby give notice that we intend to serve you with a writ for libel within the next seven days unless you agree to apologise to Mr Sheep and pay substantial damages to his relatives or buy a copy of my book, whichever is cheaper.

Yours,
PETER FARTER-CUCK



Literary Review

Rhyming cobblers

The Literary Review Anthology of Real Poetry
Ed. by Auberon Waugh
(Ashford, Buchan & Enright, £6.95)

IF ONE wanted to settle on the date when British poetry split into two irreconcilable halves, a good candidate would be 1917, the year in which T.S. Eliot published *The Lovesong of J. Alfred Prufrock.*

All at once domestic literature, previously a mass of varied, seething forms, took on recognisably opposed shapes. On the one side were the modernists — it was at about this time the word "highbrow" became a term of abuse — with their free verse, their cleverness and their wilful obscurity. On the other... well, on the other were the defenders of "real poetry", defined as traditional verse forms hymning conventional sentiments in a comprehensible way. On the one hand Eliot and Pound; on the other Larkin and Betjeman. With a few minor exceptions (where, for instance, do you put Auden?) most British poetry of the past 70 years can be categorised by means of this convenient demarcation.

Perhaps Mr Waugh's most ingenious comic idea of the past few years — and there have been many — is the *Literary Review*'s monthly poetry competition in which members of the public are offered alluring sums of money to produce parodies of "real poetry". It is all the more ingenious in that the joke is relentlessly kept up, even here in the anthology bringing together 130 of the "best" of these submissions.

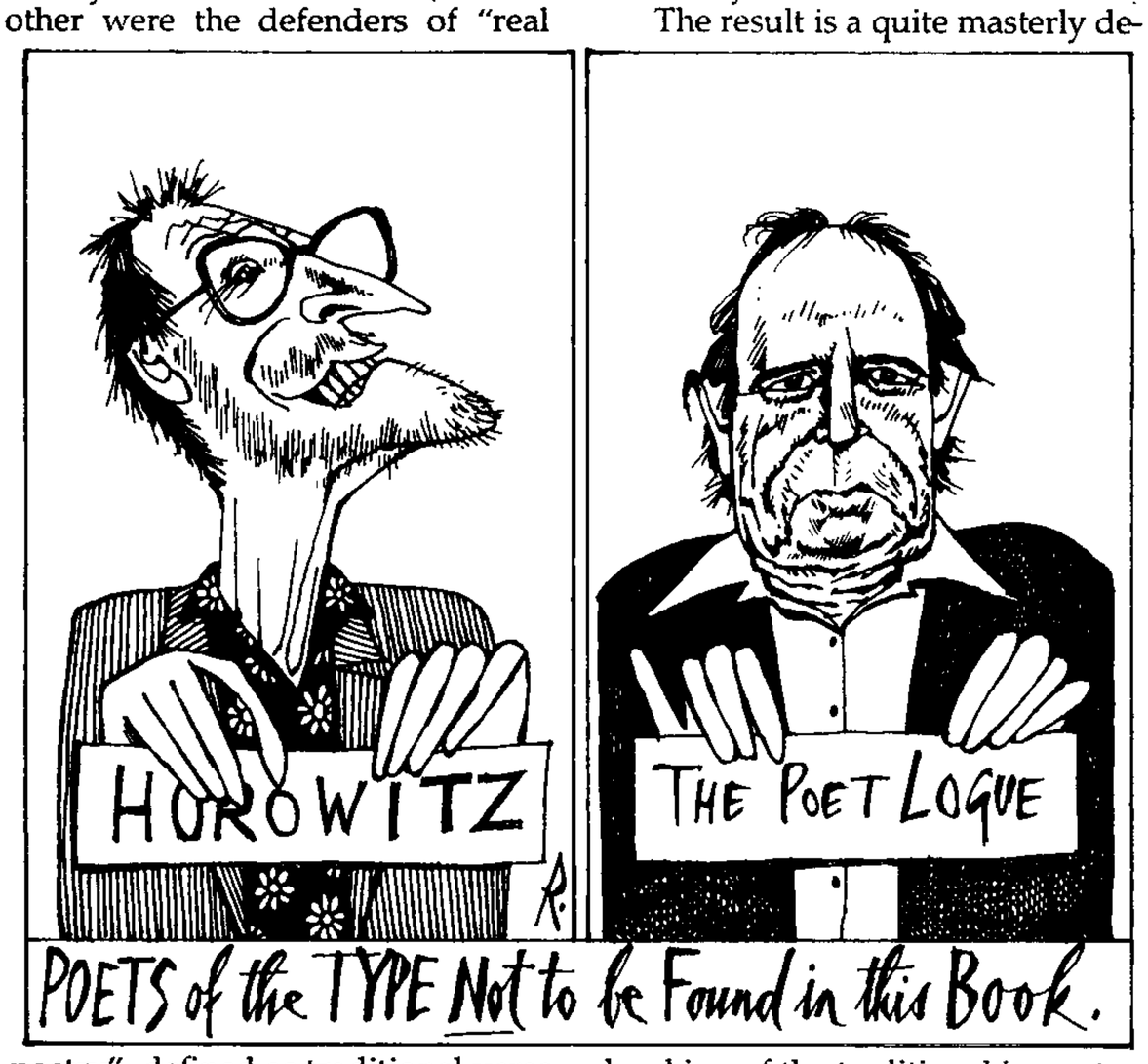
"Pastiche and parody are not eligible for the first prize, although even this rule has been waived on occasion," Mr Waugh writes in his tongue-in-cheek introduction. It is, as the discerning reader will note, that "on occasion" which gives the game away. In fact the rule has been waived on every occasion and it is this that gives the anthology its status as one of the decade's great exercises in literary subversion.

The result is a quite masterly debunking of the traditional in poetry: a series of bland, dull, derivative little poems tinkling away in the straitjackets of their rhyme schemes, heavily reminiscent of Betjeman, Barrie, Belloc and all those insipid light versifiers that most adult English men and women remember from their childhood. There is Angus Hill and his nods to Coleridge ("There is a special constable and he stoppeth one of three"); there is Bill Greenwell with his artful reproductions of Gilbertian patter songs; and there are poems about cats and giving birth to twins.

Plainly, it took considerable care to assemble a collection that was quite so comprehensive in its suggestion of the arid, deficient garden in which the seeds of "real poetry" are sown and Mr Waugh ought to be congratulated on his determination.

Even more pleasing is the impish spirit of fun which attends Mr Waugh's conduct of the enterprise. If the reviewer is to be allowed two mild criticisms of this splendid jape, they are that the joke does not quite hold up for 118 pages and that two or three of the poems (for instance Adele Geras's *An Elegy for Miss Ratcliffe*) actually have some lurking merit about them: a minor blemish that will doubtless be rectified in the many future editions.

The lesson however is invaluable: we all read in the textbooks that modernism was an historical imperative, that it "had to happen"; but it is nice to receive a practical demonstration of why.



Books & Bookmen

☐ NICK HERN, the theatre books publisher purged by Sebastian Walker, has failed to persuade an independent publisher to back him.

He did ask his old guru at Methuen, Geoffrey Strachan, to take hime back, but Geoffrey — not surprisingly, as Nick had tried to filch most of Methuen's playwrights — burst into tears.

For the moment Nick is going it alone. The first writer he has lured away from Walker is gloomy, bearded David Edgar whose National Theatre script *The Shape of the Table* is published by Hern the Hunter this week.

Edgar's play — "the behind the scenes story of the Czech revolution that brought Vaclav Havel to the Presidency" — is unlikely to be a Great Work of Literature as "the book was produced on a high speed schedule with the author submitting last minute corrections from the Rehearsal Room" — note the capitals — "Only twelve working days before publication date." Woweee!

Meanwhile Hern continues to "negotiate" with Walker for the release of others, including Simon Callow, Antony Sher, Caryl Churchill, Max Stafford-Clark, Howard Brenton and the late Kenneth Tynan.

PS: Walker pays for self-defence classes for those Walker Books employees who feel they should be better equipped for an attack by their boss. It is not known whether the chuckling Hern attended any of them but it is now revealed that Julia MacRae, she who was attacked with a large plastic bag, did.

■ *RATHER ODDLY Tim Waterstone has been lecturing his branch managers and staff on the virtues of the net book agreement.*

"If publishers have the resolve to stop Pentos destroying the Agreement they will have to show it now," he writes. "I want you to know that whatever happens, Waterstones are not going to rush into a price cutting war... Our profits are flowing through this year quite magnificently, and we are going to use those profits to open more and more bookshops. Panicky discounting will lead to our profits being destroyed, and with it our plans for the future."

Publishers have greeted this declaration by Waterstone with mixed feelings. They're delighted that he piles their upmarket books high in his emporia; they are less delighted that the more shops he opens, the more books he returns to their warehouses.

As to who's getting panicky, Waterstone has confided in his branch managers: "Too many of our part-time staff are not really book people and know too little, and therefore let us down in the way they treat the public. It is absolutely essential that staff of this sort are weeded out as fast as possible."

His memo finishes on a shrill crescendo: "Where we do fall down — and as from today, 20 August, we will fall down in this aspect no longer — is in general untidiness. For too long we have tolerated books on the floor in untidy heaps, and display tables left untended. From today, I never want to walk into a Waterstone's or Sherratt and Hughes again and witness the sort of untidiness I saw in various branches on Saturday."

☐ THE CHAMPAGNE flowed from 6.30 to 10pm at the Hyde Park Hotel for the glittering launch of Naim Attalah-Disgusting's absurd book of tape recordings, *Singular Encounters.*

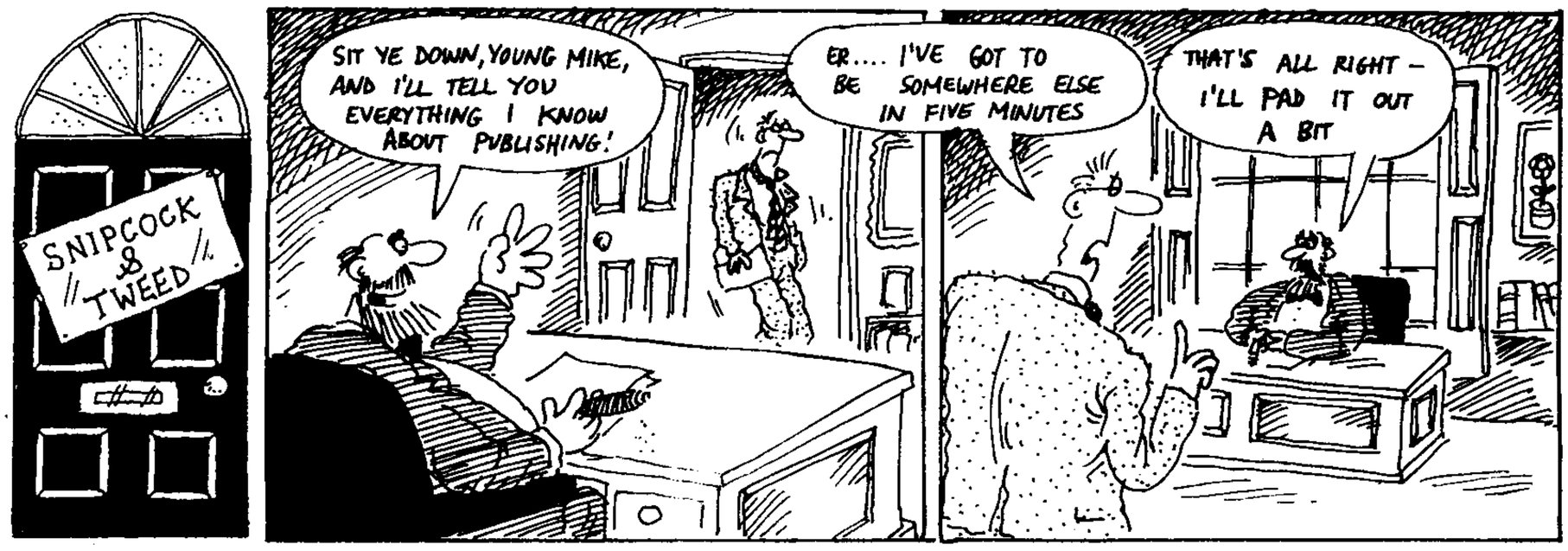
Indeed, so glittering was the evening that its climax was reached when *Evening Standard* hack Peter McKay permitted his gut to be groped by *Daily Mail* hackette Jane Kelly. What amazingly famous and influential friends Naim has!

It was a shock to learn, however, that only a few days before the launch the offices of Naim-Dropper's publishing company, Quartet Books, were visited by two inspectors from the Inland Revenue, apparently in search of thousands of pounds of unpaid tax. Apparently the sales director offered them an entire stock of books as part-payment, but the inspectors were not interested. Not even in the massively hyped *Singularly Boring*!

■ *IN THE latest edition of The Literary Review, editor Auberon Waugh welcomes a new advertising director called Jonathan Dewlap. He says Dewlap "comes from an amazing record of success in charge of advertising for Stick and Ball, the world's leading polo magazine, published by Lambourne Press, and Royal Year, the riveting annual account of the Royal Family, for Berkswell Press, as well as having worked in the advertising department of Debrett."*

Anyone in the know who meets Jonathan Dewlap may think his person and CV bear a striking resemblance to those of one James Waugh, Bron's less famous brother. Surely they are not becoming sensitive about nepotism in Naim Attalah's publishing empire?

'Bookworm'


SNIPCOCK & TWEED
SIT YE DOWN, YOUNG MIKE, AND I'LL TELL YOU EVERYTHING I KNOW ABOUT PUBLISHING!
ER.... I'VE GOT TO BE SOMEWHERE ELSE IN FIVE MINUTES
THAT'S ALL RIGHT — I'LL PAD IT OUT A BIT

Electricity

Nervous RECs

ANYONE who felt deprived of an exciting investment when the Government withdrew nuclear power stations from privatisation can take heart: another chance will present itself this month when the regional electricity companies (RECs — pronounced *wrecks*) go on sale.

These are the first slice of the industry to be offered to the public. The leading company, Eastern Electricity, is headed by Dr James Smith who worked as an engineer at the Hunterston nuclear power station. He has probably always wanted to have a nuclear power station of his own and was simply stating the obvious when he said he was determined to "reintroduce nuclear power into the generation game".

Dr Smith has a ready answer to those worried about the cost of decommissioning. "There is no need to decommission a plant plate by plate," he said. "It could just as easily be covered by a mound of earth."

This is known as entombment and even the late lamented Central Electricity Generating Board always turned against it, swearing that it would take its radioactive monsters to pieces and return the land to its former condition. Entombment has been favoured by those disposing of Chernobyl because it is too dangerous to do anything else. Good old Jim Smith, as a practical engineer, obviously hopes to benefit from this example, which is cheaper.

He plans to come to an agreement with British Nuclear Fools who have two stations of their own, at Calder Hall and Chapelcross. Both were established to make weapons-grade plutonium and electricity was a by-product. They are approaching the end of their lives and what could be better than a happy marriage with one of the RECs to build replacements?

Of course they won't necessarily make bombs, but they would be part of the nuclear industry which the Government decided was too unprofitable to be put on the market as part of National Power.

A REC should be concerned simply with reading meters, sending out bills and selling fridges and microwaves; but this will obviously be too boring for someone like Jim Smith and running a nuclear power station as a sideline would make life much more exciting. The costs could be camouflaged in a balance sheet concerned with varied activities.

Mr Smith announced his ambition in the *Sunday Correspondent* and Dewe Rogerson, the Government's marketing advisers on privatisation, and Kleinwort Benson who are selling the shares, exploded. Although it was a Sunday, they reached Jim and suggested he would help the sale if he would shut up. When, a few minutes later, the *Financial Times* rang him, he was "unavailable for comment".

Health News

Bed panned

DESPITE so-called cost cutting at the disintegrating Riverside District Health Authority in west London (see *Eyes passim*), debts have risen from £6m to £7m as life becomes increasingly desperate.

To balance the budget, the latest management (David Knowles) idea is to stop *all* cold — ie non-emergency — operations until April. Apart from the effects on the patients allegedly served by Riverside, it will be interesting to see what happens to medical student and junior staff teaching and training. It will also be interesting to see how the hospitals will compete in the so-called internal market after six months of no operations. Presumably in the meantime many despairing patients will either have fitted their own new hip joints or gone elsewhere.

The cuts seem to have been made against the feelings of the medical committee, made up of senior medical staff. In September it noted that "provision of a service to patients has been abandoned in favour of financial expediency in budget balancing — an exercise which the committee felt would fail in any case."

The lack of beds for surgery, although caused by ward closures and "inappropriate" long-stay patients, was also due to "an admission policy which hid the realities of service provision by substituting emergency admission for elective surgery".

The committee felt that elective surgery should be resumed immediately and that beds should be set aside specifically for this purpose. This would reduce the number of emergency beds available, but the closure of casualty would be better than "the continuing deception of disguising the problem".

Plenty of other problems abound in the district. A meeting on 26 September heard that:

- A consultant cyto-pathologist would not be replaced after retirement. What effect will this have on cervical smear and breast cancer screening programmes?
- It is felt that the intensive care provision in the new hospital being built will — as it is at present — still be grossly inadequate.
- The district's equipment budget has only £3,000 to last until April against submitted requests from consultants for equipment worth £250,000.
- Seventy eight beds at Charing Cross Hospital have been blocked due to lack of places elsewhere for long-term care, and others due to lack of a district nurses.
- The short-stay ward at Charing Cross, only recently opened, closed on 8 October for "financial reasons".

Privatisation

Shorts changed

PRIVATISATION, the "jewel" in the Government's crown, is looking decidedly tarnished in Northern Ireland at Shorts plc, the Belfast missiles-to-aircraft manufacturer.

Shorts is currently wondering what to do with 16 Tucano military jets destined for the Kuwaiti armed forces. Presumably Baghdad would gladly sign for them if Shorts could deliver, but for the moment Whitehall is against that sort of thing. The RAF is hoping for a surprise windfall, defence funds permitting, but this is unlikely to be the taxpayers' only expensive involvement with the company.

Last year Shorts was sold to a Canadian company, Bombardier Inc, for a pitiful £30 million. Before any money was handed over, the new owners demanded — and with the approval of then trade secretary Nicholas Ridley obtained — subsidies totalling £780 million. Put simply, the Government of free enterprise paid a net total of £750 million to be rid of Shorts and for just £30 million Bombardier gained sole control of the company and its assets — including ownership of Belfast City airport and a substantial land bank.

Bombardier refused, however, to accept ownership of four Shorts subsidiaries established to lease aircraft, mainly in the United States. These planes are increasingly outdated, heavy fuel guzzlers that remain the property of the Government via the Northern Ireland Office (NIO). Despite widespread advertising in the trade press, attempts to sell the planes have failed and fuel price rises only make early disposal more unlikely.

The Government, however, is legally bound to maintain leasing contracts until 2005 and the NIO reassuringly puts the total bill at an absolute maximum of £277 million. In the not unimaginable event that the planes are not sold, privatisation of Shorts will have cost more than £1 billion.

Following 700 redundancies prior to the sale, Shorts now employs around 7,000 people. This leaves a per capita subsidy at which those facing the dole in similar industries in Scotland and the North of England can only gaze in wonder.

Construction

Up a Gumi tree

BRITISH companies associated with the Japanese construction firm Kumagai Gumi — the most active Japanese developer in the UK — are no doubt aware of some recent Japanese history.

Taichiro Kumagai, its president, and Motou Outsuka, its managing director, are now helping Inspector Knacker-san with inquiries into the collapse last January of a tunnel Kumagai Gumi was building beneath the streets of Tokyo. As a result of the incident, Taichiro Kumagai has resigned as chairman of the Japan Civil Engineering Contractors Association.

The tunnel, a link for the Japan Railways bullet train line, was supposed to have been strengthened with a chemical coagulant. After the accident, however, it was found that only half the correct amount of coagulant had been used and this caused the tunnel to collapse.

Further investigation revealed that the company subcontracted to carry out the coagulant work on behalf of Kumagai Gumi, Omoto Gumi, was well aware of the deficiency and had doctored records to make it appear that the correct amount had been injected into the soil. The company had even taken photographs of trucks delivering non-existent coagulant, which it had used during construction to prove to Japan Railways that the injection work was being carried out.

The photographs, however, also revealed that officials of Kumagai Gumi were present during the injecting operation and must have colluded in the scam. Investigators believe both companies saved a lot of money through the fraud since chemical coagulant is expensive.

Not long after the tunnel collapsed — and after a tip-off from a construction worker — another tunnel was inspected along a line east of Tokyo. It was found to be dangerously void of strengthening coagulants. Once again, Kumagai Gumi was the main contractor. As a result, Kumagai Gumi was suspended from participating in bids for construction projects on all Tokyo underground and Japanese overground railways.

Knacker-san's inquiry has now reached the highest levels of the company. Kumagai Gumi and its UK partners have projects worth around £1 billion here, including property developments in Mayfair and Watford, following Kumagai's takeover this year of property company Ranelagh Developments.

Channel tunnel

Underground and under-funded

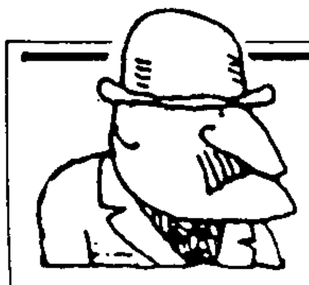
EUROTUNNEL, having "broken through", is now starting its last attempt (assuming nothing else goes wrong) to raise yet more money.

A prospectus, which has to be rushed out ahead of electricity privatisation, should explain that the original promise of a dividend by 1995 has to be amended to 1998 and that the whole project is costing 60 percent more than original estimates.

The question becoming increasingly pertinent is whether the people who got it wrong before have now got it right (their £4.8 billion estimate is now up to £7.7 billion). So far they have also had to borrow 17 percent of the money (£1,300 million) as a disguised public subsidy from the European Investment Bank to scrape through.

When the first offer of shares was made in 1987, Dewe Rogerson, who handled the marketing, announced four days before the underwriting was due to be completed that 574,000 investors were "certain" to be buying shares. But only 112,000 actually did.

The underwriters were left holding 20 percent of the shares. There would have been even fewer sold but for the advance publicity which proved to have been misleading — most conveniently for Eurotunnel. It is spending £5 million of the money invested last time to attract more money this time. Watch their lips.



In the City

IF ANYONE was expecting the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth from Asil Nadir during his limp "interrogation" by the *Money Programme*'s Peter Jay, then they don't know the Turkish Delight. Never a man to prefer a straight answer when a curved one will do even better, Nadir served up 20 minutes of evasion, dissembling and buck-passing.

Everyone — bankers, administrators, "bear raid" speculators, regulators, the press (for once he left out the Greeks) — was to blame for the Polly Peck collapse but him. To listen to the Nadir fairy tale — as Cap'n Bob's former poodle, clearly well trained, faithfully did — one would find it hard to believe that there was a potential £384 million hole in the Polly Peck balance sheet.

(Cap'n Bob was one man Jay could have asked for a reference on Nadir. In 1987 British Printing and Pergamon Holdings took up 500,000 shares in Polly Peck at 213p each. Wily Maxwell, who knows a thing or two about billionaire debt, appears to have sold before the crash.)

But then Asil's art always was to spin wallet-warming tales of the wondrous East that for almost a decade beguiled greedy and/or gullible brokers, bankers and journalists. To all who would believe, the message was the same: don't question the figures, look at the share price. That's what Asil did every minute he sat at his desk. For that was what Polly Peck was really all about: the share price — not cardboard boxes and the oranges, lemons or TVs inside them.

There were those who cried "look at the king". Only now when it is too late have the over-eager followers discovered that Polly Peck's supposed finery was all in their mind — cleverly placed there by Asil's analyst and press megaphones. He was smart enough to let others do most of the talking.

Three points worthy of comment did emerge from the *Money Programme* interview.

Asil once again denied he was guilty of "unauthorised" share dealing. As he was Polly Peck chairman, controller of its largest shareholder Restro Investments and the life tenant of South Audley Management, he would be in a position to authorise any share dealings by those companies or any Nadir trust. So what, if anything, does "unauthorised" mean?

Polly Peck's bankers and institutional shareholders were no doubt further reassured to learn that, totally contrary to what he repeatedly had claimed, Nadir now says he deliberately did not bring back from Turkey and Northern Cyprus money that was available to repay them. Nadir told the bankers at two meetings that he was doing everything to repatriate funds, but local banks for other reasons were holding up the money. Their cheque would be in his pocket after the next trip. Now we are told all the time it was him — in the interests of shareholders by keeping the companies trading! — who was refusing to bring the money back. If true — the money has still not been verified by the administrators — that is hardly likely to persuade banks to trust him again.

Nadir claimed he was now in a position to meet his personal liabilitie. This will come as a welcome surprise to brokers Shearson Lehman and Barclays De Zoete Wedd, who are seeking to bankrupt him over the £22 million he owes on share deals done in a vain bid to support the Polly Peck price before the September suspension. Given that the total claims — adding in Carr Kitcat & Aitken and Restro's bankers — could be in excess of £100 million, Nadir's confidence may be hard to share. Especially as Shearson was so unconvinced of his ability to pay, it sued only two days before the interview.

Just how much the brokers get back must be highly questionable, but clients of all three firms who have had Polly Peck shares force fed to them for years by tame analysts (busy recommending the shares even as they hit the skids) might shed no tears if BZW, Shearson and Carr Kitcat & Aitken took the same total hit they are likely to take on their shares.

Shareholders can and should blame analysts for their relentless puffery of the Sultan with no clothes. The doyen of Asilikhan was Peter Jones, first of Messel which became Shearson. "There's no question that by Christmas 1990 Polly Peck shares will be trading at around £5," he told *The Times* just over a year ago. Oh really! Well it wasn't for any lack of puffing on Jones' and Shearson's part. He was still boosting Polly Peck at 435p in July, just weeks before the storm broke that blew it away.

But it is not just the analysts who have a great deal to answer for over Polly Peck. They would have been much less effective without the eulogies for Nadir in the financial press. Few were the City columns which failed to buy the Asil fantasy. Most also failed to ask the questions that were always there but have only now been discovered about profits from a land whose currency was eroding daily.

Even the *Sunday Times*, which has helped dismantle the myth and had been on occasion a critic, was more often previously a supporter.

"Asil Nadir has done it again," it trumpeted on 27 May this year. "Polly Peck has proved wrong the theory that fallen angels never come back. Shares enjoyed a great run last year and show few signs of flagging in 1990." Two months before, on 25 March, it had been "watch out for sparkling results this week". A lengthy favourable item appeared on 3 December, 1989. On 5 November a fulsome profile of Nadir had concluded with a fan's quote: "Surely one of the most endearing, charismatic industrialists of our time." Yes, indeed.

The *Sunset Times* clearly agreed as it tipped Polly Peck twice during 1988. "Investors should take note of Nadir's remarkable confidence in Polly Peck's future and consider following his example" (6 June). "The shares look attractive" (10 January).

One *Sunset Times* Nadir booster was John Jay, now of the *Sunday Telegraph*, which was by no means immune to Polly Peck's charms earlier this year. No doubt by coincidence John Jay was the only journalist prior to the BBC Jay to obtain an on the record audience with the Sultan.

John Jay tipped Polly Peck in April 1987 saying that the City was re-rating the company and "for shareholders it could be a rewarding process". He was even more enthusiastic in November, after the great crash, declaring: "Polly Peck is no longer a one man band". Oh really — tell that to the other directors.

The wretched Michael Walters of the *Daily Mail* — "I am a friend and admirer of Nadir" (11 November, 1989) — has rivalled Jones in his loyalty. A one-time critic who even suggested selling the shares in 1985 — a rare and never repeated moment of doubt — Walters instead repeatedly backed Nadir with all the fervour of the convert from March 1987 ("cheep, cheep") to the end: "The shares may not get near 950p this year but watch for 600p and then some" (18 June, 1990).

Walters had the decency to admit his mistake and apologise. But other Nadir fans have no reason to gloat. *The Times* has been a long-standing true believer. "Polly Peck shares clearly merit a better rating" (25 May, 1990) or "Polly Peck is pukka" (22 December, 1989). So too was the *Daily Telegraph*: "The pessimists are running out of road" (2 April, 1990) and "an exciting buy" (27 November, 1989). Almost as enthusiastic have been the *Sunday Express* — "Polly Peck should continue to outperform" (12 December, 1989) — and the *Daily Express*. While the *Independent* and its Sunday twin ("Asil Nadir's long haul bears fruit" — 27 May, 1990) appeared to be heading for the fanclub just before the fall.

None of which of course prevents any of these informed organs of information now jumping on the anti-Asil bandwagon. Although certain of them seem still to show a remarkable lingering faith — evidenced by taking the Nadir line that the SFO raid on Polly Peck was a sign of desperation and calling for arrests tomorrow as proof that there is a case against their former idol.

Perhaps such critics might take their cue from Asil's BBC claim that he is doing everything to cooperate with the SFO and suggest he do everything in his power — which naturally he is doing — to encourage his associates Elizabeth Forsyth and Jason Davies to return to Britain from their Swiss refuge so they can be interviewed by the SFO and clear up all these misunderstandings about share support operations.

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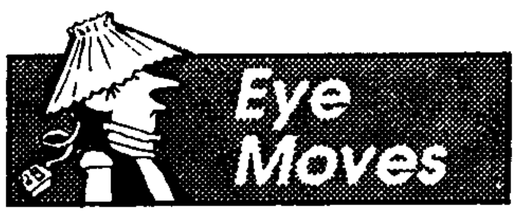

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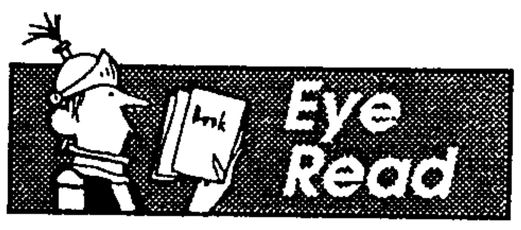

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THE ACADEMY CLUB is sad to announce the loss of our Deputy Bar Person: Miss Paula Bingham, actress, chanteuse, acrobat, philosopher, political activist of extraordinary charm and beauty, provider of a shoulder to cry on for many of our more sensitive members, is leaving to take ill-paid temporary employment as the sweet, innocent Jocasta in a Christmas panto in Chipping Norton. Can you replace her? Only people of friendly, honest disposition need apply to CAPTAIN ROBERT POSNER, Academy Club/Literary Review, tel 071-287 8560 or 437 9392.

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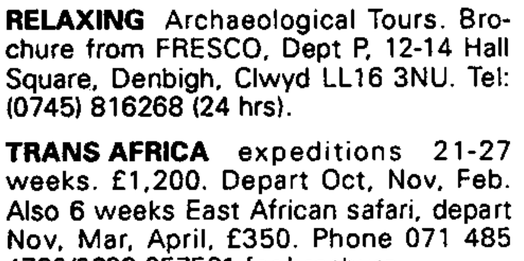

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FEMALE, unemployed, needs £1,000 start new life. Donations welcome. Box 2054.

LIKE TO BE millionairess. Anybody rich enough to help? Box 2154.

I DESPERATELY need £50,000 to get life back on the rails. All responses acknowledged. Box 2254.

FILM STUDENT, award winner, producing original short opera as graduation film. £11,000 required. Offers? Ideas? Box 2354.

DESPERATE young man needs money for sex change. Box 2454.

LAD, never travelled, would appreciate air miles. Box 2554.

YOUNG MOTHER — Gulf Crisis. Please help me gather £1,800 to clear o/s bills. Due to Saddam Hussein no Annual Bonus paid. Thanks. Box 2654.

DESPERATELY needing help with deposit for flat. Box 2754.

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WOULD LIKE to see sharks off. £10,217 would sink them. All donations acknowledged. Box 2954.

ARCHITECTURAL STUDENT seeks £3,000 to work on homeless international development project in Trinidad. Donations gratefully acknowledged, reports supplied. Box 3054.

SINGLE MUM, debts £250, desperate. Box 3354.

YOUNG GERMAN MAN (26) needs urgently £35,000. Everything considered. Help please! Box 1552.

RADA STUDENT needs fees paid please. Box 3554.

CHOIR DESPERATELY needs funds to remain on high note. Donations, sponsorship, anything gratefully received. Box 3654.

PHOTOGRAPHIC STUDENT (21) desperately requires £200 to replace stolen camera. All letters answered. Box 3754.

OXFORD STUDENT, 20, sinking fast: requires £2000 life-saver. Anything and everything considered. Try me. Box 3854.

EVER BEEN generous and trusting with a woman, and then stitched up? Me too. Lost house, etc, need 7K to restart. I have given in the past, will someone do the same for me? Thank you. Box 3954.

COMPETITIVE SWIMMER needs funds to keep head above water. Box 4054.

YOUNG HIGHFLIER, grounded, £10,000 needed for take-off. Anything considered, favours returned. Box 4154.

MUM AND DAD are in debt. Can you help? Money needed. Thank you. Box 4254.

DESPERATE BABY needs funds. Out of work mother. Last resort before adoption. Box 4354.

YOUNG MAN (25) also wants to be a millionaire. Box 4554.

DESPERATE young man seeks £12,000 for life-saving treatment. Box 4654.

WHO WANTS to be a millionaire? I do! Box 4754.

FOUR GRADUATES require £250,000 to buy Lamborghini. Please help. Box 4854.

ONE-MAN PUBLISHER needs £25,000 to pay, research and underwrite new projects. Published acknowledgements if required. Box 3254.

EX-ESCORT desperately needs to find form for vision to write and direct. I need to find a quiet place within. £20,000 would be like a dream answered not for a grand house or great car but to support me on my quest and exploration. Any exchange or transaction in return I could be open to. Box 4454.

COMPOSER, too old to remain destitute, needs money. Donations? £100 brings original, dedicated composition. Box 4954.

LADY PENSIONER requires substantial loan for 4 months against securities, due to dishonest solicitor. Reasonable interest paid. Legal advice acceptable. Box 5054.

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YOUNG MAN (23) wishes to inherit a fortune. All donations gratefully received. Box 5254.

£1M NEEDED by young couple to move out of city to country. Fed up with being mugged (wife) and want kids! Box 5354.

MY SWEET PRINCE has multiple sclerosis. I can't cope and need money to feel secure and for us to stay together. Please help. Box 5454.

URGENT FUNDS needed for further research into conditions leading to chemical addiction and addictive behaviour. Findings to be published. Genuine. Box 5554.

WOLVES at the door. Hardworking couple can't meet debts, about to lose everything. Please help. Box 5654.

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AUSTRALIAN WOMAN willing to help British National. Box 1654.

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ORIENTAL ladies seek gentlemen for friendship and marriage. Send SAE for details to MISS S. OUNBAN, G80, PO Box 100, Reigate, Surrey RH2 8YX.

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MOSCOW CONNECTION. 200 lovely, cultured Russian females, university students, doctors, lawyers, teachers and more, seek love/marriage with similar caring gentlemen. 081-505 4095 office hours.

VIVACIOUS, thirtysomething married lady graduate seeks discreet, uncomplicated relationship with a bright, humorous man — active in mind and body. Must be able to laugh in bed. Photo appreciated. London/Thames Valley. Box 12654.

MALE, 25, own home, S.W. Herts, works Central London enjoys nights out and hillwalking, seeks woman for fun and companionship. Box 5954.

BEAUTIFUL woman, 38, desperately seeking moral, creative Londoner. Box 6054.

ROMANTIC graduate, professional man, 44, solvent needs a lady for fun, laughter, lunch and escape. Box 6154.

I LIKE A MAN who can make me laugh! If he's tall, successful, late 30s-mid 40s and possesses the same good-looks, intelligence, sensitivity, warmth, with and wicked sense of humour as this vivacious, stylish, caring, emotionally/financially secure, professional graduate divorcee — she would love to hear from him. Letter/photo please. Thames Valley. Box 6254.

SHY, SENSITIVE, caring, single man, 30, City analyst. Interests classical music, gardening, countryside, seeks young Christian lady for friendship view marriage. Surrey. Box 6354.

VERY TALL LADY, non-smoker, needed to enliven tall, boring, cynical, slightly eccentric chap (28). Hampshire/South. Box 6454.

MALE, 40, seeks woman interested in alternative therapies for mutual practice and pleasure. London. Box 6554.

A LADY possessing stunning looks and a winning personality sought by a gorgeous 27 year old Arian male. London. Box 6654.

IF YOU'VE GOT the career and now need an understanding man to make it all worthwhile, why not contact this 33 year old Nottingham businessman who's in the same boat! Box 6754.

CULTURED, discreet 57 year, tall male needs lady with delicious everything. Sod friendship. Need to fall in love. Box 6854.

TRISTAN (26) seeks Isolde for brief affair and tasteful funeral. Edinburgh/North East. Box 6954.

GERMAN WOMAN, 37, staying near Cambridge until December, seeks open-minded, sensitive Englishman for weekends. Enjoys culture and nature, eating out, conversation and cuddling. (Write soon.) Box 7054.

Sorry!
You may have to wait two issues or more before your EYE LOVE ad is published due to the enormous demand.

HUMOROUS, SLIM male, 50, seeks attractive lady for love affair. Discretion assured. Oxford area. Photo, phone no. please. Box 7154.

MAGIC MOMENTS and witch sublime/sought by wizard in his prime/All answers must rhyme. Box 7254.

SINGLE MALE, 37, fed up with everybody else having fun, seeks outgoing woman, any age for steamy affair. Midlands/North/Anywhere. Box 7354.

SUCCESSFUL graduate male, mature, 26 year old senior manager, witty, caring, seeks intelligent, humorous, sensitive female, 23-33, for friendship and more. Yorks/N.E. Please write — all letters answered. Box 7454.

GRADUATE, 23, inexperienced, dark, 5'9", well-built, charming and affectionate but shy, seeks pleasant, buxom female (up to 45) for discreet "no strings" relationship. London area. Photo appreciated. Box 7554.

WILL YOU be my wing man any time? Racey redhead seeks available aviator — aged 36-46. Ditto fit, educated, successful, hilarious — to help restore dented sense of humour. Photo please of at least four facial features ensures hilarious reply. Box 7654.

DASHING YOUNG British medics, marooned on Operation Granby seek vivacious females for six months of celibate correspondence. Must be prepared for vigorous un-celibate activity on our return. Sand paper supplied. Photo demanded. Box 7754.

RUGGED, successful gentleman, early 30s, (with hairy chest) seeks sensuous, chic female who enjoys living and loving. (I can make breakfast in the morning!) Photo/phone number please. Box 7854.

EURYDICE — where the hell are you? ORPHEUS.

HANDSOME, passionate, English writer seeks slim, sensitive and preferably wealthy young woman for unification of assets and a beautiful life abroad. Box 4853.

GUY, 52, leaving 22nd December for two weeks in coastal Welsh cottage seeks female companion who likes log fires and good walks. Box 10053.

I'M A Joker, non-smoker. Some call me the space cowboy, most call me Peter (27). Looking for an attractive girl to present a pair of 501's to. Box 7954.

UP-MARKET, good looks, tall, fun, educated, 42, married, professional, seeking personable, very attractive, tallish woman for caring, romantic, discreet term, relationship. London. Box 8054.

MALE, 32, professional, considered attractive/good looking, not lonely, bored or broke, seeks attractive/good looking professional lady, London/Home Counties who, like me, is wondering "If it wasn't for EYE LOVE, how would I meet someone like this?" Don't be embarrassed or shy. Take a chance — my photo for yours. Box 8154.

FIFE MALE, fit, thirtysomething, seeks discreet lady for frantically physical relationship. Box 8254.

FIT, UNATTACHED, 51 male, 6', own hi-tec business, S.W. cost seeks fun, penfriendship with lonely female, married or single. View committed relationship. Anywhere. Box 8354.

PETER, 38, Warwickshire, seeks N/S, sharp, witted, warm hearted, feminine company. Box 8554.

ELIGIBLE bachelor, 31, tall, strong, handsome and kind, seeks pretty, blonde, public-school girlfriend, 18-22. (Send photo). Box 8153.

ORPHEUS, 27, laughing philosopher. Wishes Eurydice would follow him into the light. Box 4653.

PROFESSIONAL female (28), with amazing eyes and wild earrings seeks fun-loving, witty, male (26-36) to brighten her life (Midlands). Box 8454.

STILL SEEKING at 45? Once married, London professional woman (5'2", slim, dark) humanistic orientation, seeks attractive male(s), 35-50, for fun, friendship etc. Diverse interests and passions. Box 8654.

YOU ARE A woman approx 35 to 45 living in the Midlands area. Interested in artistic and cerebral things. I am tall, slim, attractive, divorced and will write to you providing you are not mentally deranged. Box 8754.

ATTRACTIVE, professional woman, 30, enjoying life in Surrey would like a romantic man with charm and a sense of humour to share it with. Box 8854.

BEN GUNN, alias 35 year old, professional, marooned I.O.M these last ten years seeks Greenish, sybariticism, uncomplicated female to share log cabin and cheese. Box 8954.

WICKED, attractive male, 39½, warm, humorous and lots of vices seeks female similar or willing to learn. Avon area. Box 9054.

INDIAN MALE accountant, 38, seeks lusty woman for no-strings fun. Wembley/vicinity. Box 9154.

ACADEMIC, 6ft, 30, seeks slim, female culture vulture (20-35). London/S.E. Photo appreciated. Box 9254.

YOUNG GENTLEMAN, mid 20s, requests sophisticated lady, mid 30s, to help in previously neglected exploration into art, music and literature through correspondence and occasional meeting over a ten year period. Box 9354.

GLASGOW. Professional male, 37, divorced (no children), tall, slim, O.K. looking, loves romance, travel, fun, seeks professional female with similar ideas. Photo, phone number. Box 9454.

OFFICER AND gentleman, 30, posted London, seeks slim, bright female for honest friendship and fun. I'm sincere, fit and reliable. Photo assures reply. Box 9554.

YOUNG (32)
successful, married male, discreet, ambitious and bored seeks sexy, attractive, loving, feminine female 20-40 for fun and excitement/tenderness. Letter with photograph and phone number ensures reply. Kent/South East. Anywhere.
Box 9654.

COLOUR, WARMTH and excitement? Age/status are of secondary importance! Special lady sought by aesthetic, sporty, boyish-looking male (31). I'm a Northerner but visit London regularly. Snapshot appreciated. Box 9754.

FEMALE SOUGHT for food fight! Must enjoy the thought of getting messy with young male looney! Box 9854.

HORNY WOMAN wanted with sense of humour. I'm 33 and try hard. London. Box 9954.

WANTED. Super and interesting girl, 25-35, tall, slim, good face, loves mountains, Beethoven, drink, friends and ecstasies with handsome man. Cambridge. Fire sign or Gemini best. Box 10054.

VERY ROMANTIC, discreet liaison sought by exceptionally good-looking, educated, well-off, hunkish, zany, upmarket male, 41, with tall, very attractive, educated and interesting woman. London.Box 10154.

ROMANTIC MALE, 40ish, witty, warm, soaring sensuality, attached, desires discreet daytime love with ultra-feminine lady. North. Box 10254.

TALL, HANDSOME, fortyish, professional man, seeks confirmation that somewhere in the world, perhaps even in Glasgow, there's a lovely, intelligent younger woman who'd appreciate his company. Box 10354.

MISMATCHED MAN, kids, seeks similarly cornered female, in fifties for rehabilitation therapy. Prefers francophiles liking bop, books and Woody Allen films. Sussex. Box 10454.

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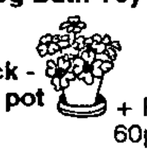

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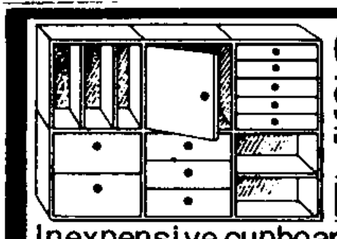

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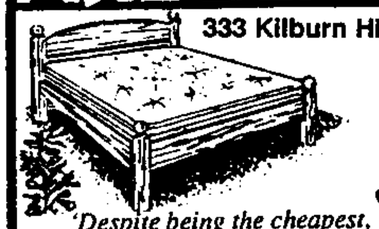

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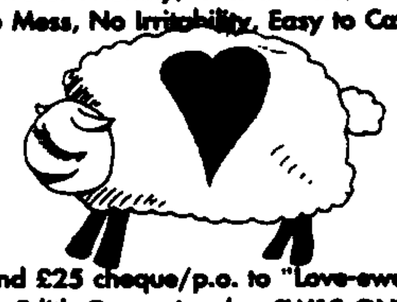

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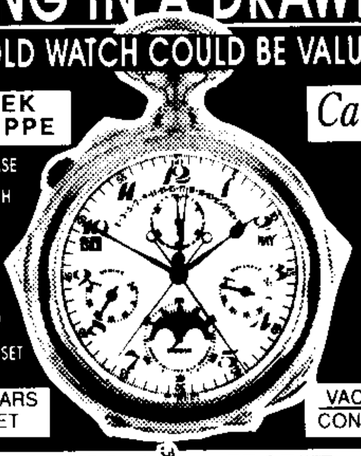

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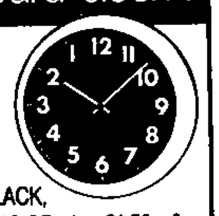

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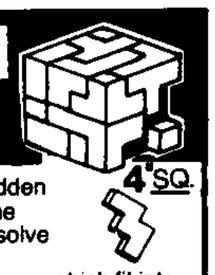

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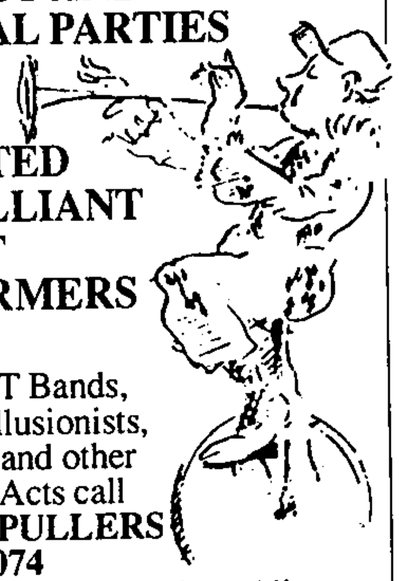

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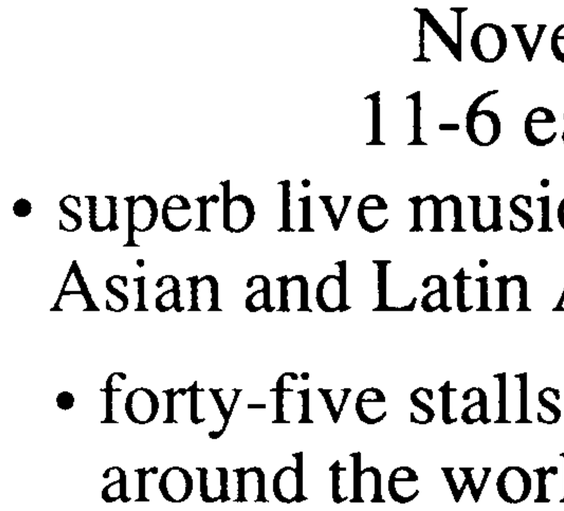

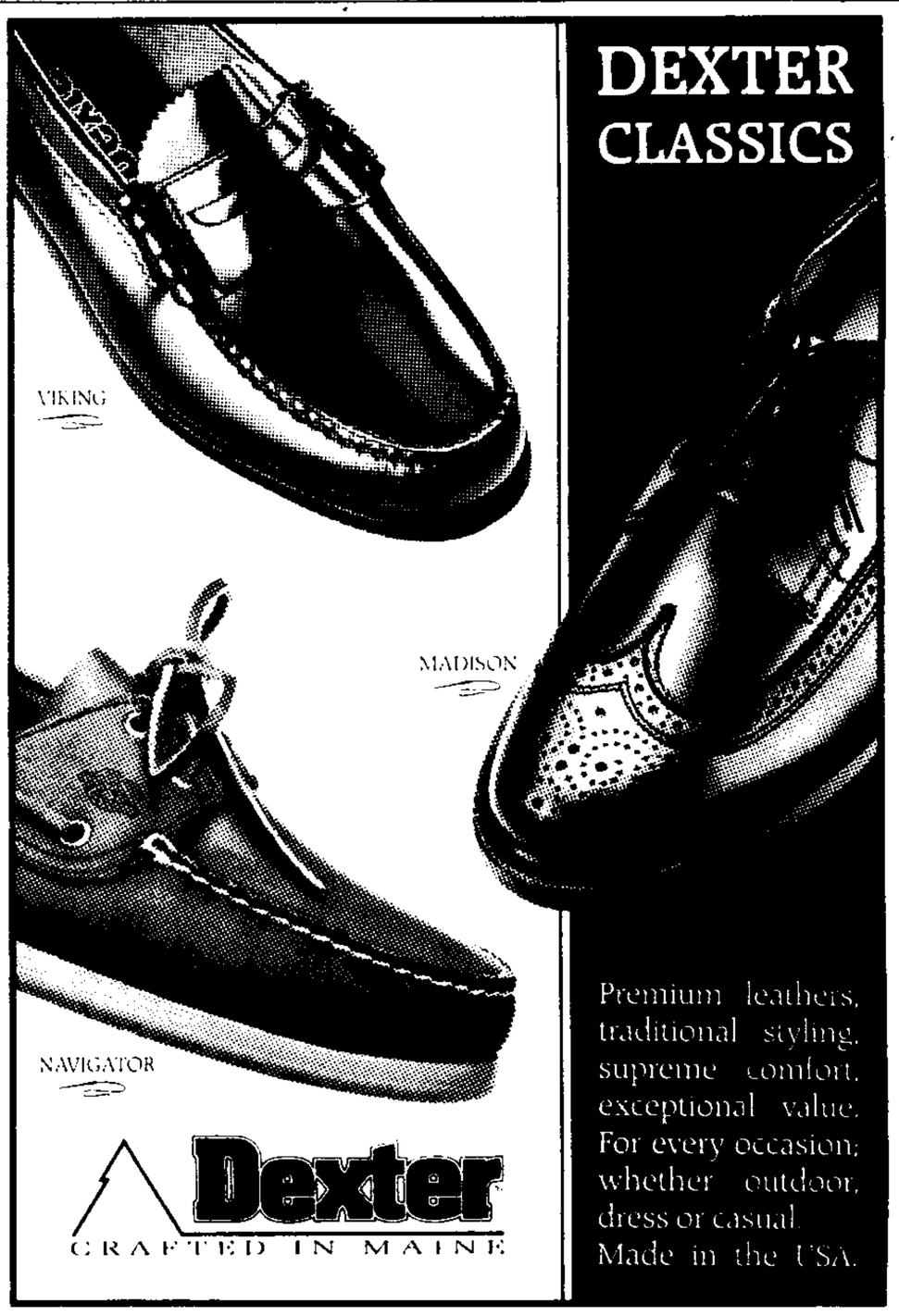
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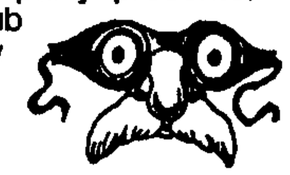

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